

Democrats take lead ahead of elections

WASHINGTON (AFP) — In a striking turnabout, more U.S. votes now favour sending more Democratic allies of President Bill Clinton to Congress than their Republican rivals, according to a poll released Saturday. Fully 40 per cent of those surveyed in the Time/CNN poll said they would vote for a Democratic candidate against 35 per cent for a Republican candidate. Two weeks ago, the proportion was roughly the opposite, with 41 per cent of those polled saying they would vote for a Republican against 35 per cent for a Democrat. Mr. Clinton's approval rating meanwhile climbed to 48 per cent, with 40 per cent disapproval. The rise comes after intensive campaigning by Mr. Clinton for Democrats after a string of foreign policy successes. The White House made a point of stressing during Mr. Clinton's tour of the Midwest which ended Saturday. The outcome of the Nov. 8 vote, in which the full 435-seat House of Representatives, 35 of the 100 Senate seats and 36 of 50 state governorships are up for grabs, is key to the fate of the second half of Mr. Clinton's term. Mid-term elections usually bring bad news for the party represented in the White House.

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House starts debate on peace treaty today after clearing snags

Mosque violence mushrooms into IAF demand for 'means' for voicing opposition to treaty

Lawmakers approve reply to speech from the Throne

By Ghadeer Taher
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Lower House of Parliament on Saturday postponed debate of the draft peace treaty with Israel as Islamist deputies won the House's support for their demand that the opposition's freedom to express its views be guaranteed.

The House demanded that the government officially explain its reasons for wanting the legislature to address the treaty, which was presented as a draft law, with urgency. Official sources said the government met the deputies' demands after the session, although one official questioned the motives behind the House's request because "we have explained those reasons many times already."

The reasons offered by the government were the speedy recovery of the Kingdom's rights in land and water, among others, an official source said.

The legislature will begin debate of the treaty today during a short session before

deputies leave for the Royal Court to present the House's response to the speech from the Throne with which His Majesty King Hussein opened the second ordinary session of Parliament last week.

The House will refer the draft treaty to the Foreign Affairs Committee before it is discussed on the floor. Despite fierce opposition from the Islamists, the treaty is expected to be ratified by the legislature with a strong majority.

The tension that is expected to characterise the debate of the treaty was obvious in Saturday's session, which ended with a shouting match. Deputies argued over a statement adopted by the House condemning violence in which an IAF lawmaker was slightly injured after attacking the peace treaty in last Friday's prayers sermon.

IAF Deputy Bassam Omoush said the Islamists objected to the failure of the statement to detail the legal means available to the opposition to express its views against the peace treaty

the Kingdom signed with Israel on Wednesday.

The 16-member IAF bloc in the House wanted the statement to emphasise the opposition's right to hold rallies and strikes to protest against the treaty while the statement only referred to freedom of expression in general terms.

The Islamists finally got their way after a late evening meeting between IAF parliamentarians and centrist deputies. The lawmakers amended the statement to meet the IAF deputies' demands.

Dr. Omoush told the Jordan Times the amendments did not contradict what deputies had agreed upon earlier because they correspond with "the spirit of the original statement" that was read out at parliament.

The statement, which was read out to the House by Deputy Mobammad Daoudieh, declared Friday's clashes at the Abu Hureira mosque and called for the establishment of a commission to investigate and prosecute those found responsible

for the incident.

"The House of Representatives expresses sorrow, pain and condemnation" of the violence to which Deputy Abu Zant was subjected, the statement said.

Deputy Abu Zant was taken to the King Hussein Medical Centre after suffering minor injuries in clashes with worshippers and police after delivering a sermon against the Jordan-Israel peace treaty.

IAF Deputy Abdullah Akaileh accused the security forces of complicity in the Friday violence, adding that the government was gagging the opposition's voice.

Dr. Akaileh said the security forces watched as "instigators" attacked Sheikh Abu Zant after he delivered the anti-peace sermon.

Interior Minister Saleh Hamad refuted the charges, saying that an investigation in the incident has been launched.

Mr. Hamad said Sheikh Abu Zant delivered the sermon after 16 youngsters.

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The Lower House of Parliament in session on Saturday (see page 3) (Photo by Youssef Allan)

Government studying proposal to reduce customs duty on cars

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The government is considering a proposal to reduce customs duties on small passenger vehicles as part of the Kingdom's moves towards adjusting its customs tariffs to be compatible with international trade agreements, informed sources said Saturday.

Officials refused to confirm reports in the local press giving specific rates of reduction based on engine sizes of passenger cars. They said the revised tariffs were not finalised and as such none of the reports could be confirmed as accurate.

However, other sources said the reports were based on a study prepared by the Ministry of Finance and Customs in response to an instruction from the Prime Ministry. They said the study was sent to the Prime Ministry but that the full Council of Ministers did not have a chance yet to look at it.

Finance Minister Sami Gammoh was also non-committal on specifics of the proposal, but he did confirm that the government was studying the issue.

According to the local reports, the reduced customs duties would take effect either on Nov. 1 or on Jan. 1, but Mr. Gammoh declined to confirm this.

"We are in the process of looking very closely at the whole range of issues related to customs duties on cars," Mr. Gammoh told the Jordan Times shortly before he left for Casablanca to attend the Middle East and North Africa Economic Summit in the Moroccan city.

The minister implied that a decision could be announced as soon as he gets back from the Oct. 30-Nov. 1 Casablanca conference.

According to the reports in the local press, the study suggests reductions ranging up to 50 per cent on present tariffs on passenger cars.

The "recommendations," the authenticity of which could not be immediately established, suggest a uniform 20 per cent duties on cars used by the handicapped; 70 per cent and 60 per cent respectively for new and used cars of up to an engine size of 1,500 cc instead of the present 135 per cent and 115 per cent; 90 per cent and 80 per cent instead of the present 140 and 120 per cent for cars up to 2,000 cc; 110 per cent and 100 per cent instead of present 190 and 180 per cent for cars up to 2,500 cc; 130 per cent and 120 per cent instead of the present 230 and 220 per cent for cars up to 3,000 cc and 160 per cent and 150 per cent instead of the present 320 per cent and 310 per cent for cars with an engine size over 3,000 cc.

Reducing customs duties on passenger cars imported to the Jordanian market has been a long-standing quest of the U.S. Commerce Department, which has been com-

plaining the structure of Jordanian customs tariffs favoured smaller Japanese cars when compared with the large engine size American-made vehicles.

The Americans were lobbying the Jordanian government to replace the customs duty structure based on engine size of the vehicles to a system based on the actual price of the vehicles. This would substantially benefit American manufacturers by making U.S.-made vehicles more competitive in the market.

The proposed reduction in customs duties will benefit American car exporters to Jordan to a limited extent in that the reduced tariffs would mean bringing down the prices in general, thus making some of the cheaper American-made vehicles within the reach of the average car buyer in Jordan.

With or without the Amer-

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Palestinian police release professor

GAZA (R) — Palestinian police on Saturday released a journalism professor at Gaza's Islamic University arrested after he was alleged to have accused Jordan of treason, university sources said. Nashat Al Aktash was arrested after he used a lecture to criticise the peace treaty signed between Israel and Jordan on Wednesday, the sources said. A student recorded the lecture. Police and members of the Palestinian self-rule authority were not available for comment. Although the authority's leader, Yasser Arafat, welcomed the Israel-Jordan treaty, he opposed the role it gave to Jordan to supervise Muslim sites in Jerusalem, which Palestinians want as the capital of a future state.

Weizman to visit Egypt for first time

TEL AVIV (AFP) — President Ezer Weizman will in early December become the first Israeli head of state to visit Egypt, an authoritative source said here Saturday. The source gave no precise date for the visit, which was to take place at the invitation of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. His predecessor Anwar Sadat made history when he visited occupied Jerusalem in November 1977, opening the way for Egypt to become the first Arab country to make peace with Israel two years later. But Mr. Mubarak himself has not visited the Jewish state since taking over in 1981 after Sadat was assassinated by Islamic militants. Mr. Weizman, who was defence minister at the time, was a fervent advocate of peace with Egypt in exchange for an Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai under their 1979 treaty.

Yemen says gang of saboteurs arrested

ADEN (R) — Police in Yemen have arrested members of a gang plotting to assassinate senior government officials and attack vital installations, security sources said on Saturday. They told Reuters gang members, rounded up over the past two days in the capital Sanaa, were targeting government officials including the justice and foreign affairs ministers, as well as senior members of the Islamist Islah party. It was not immediately clear why those officials were targeted.

Clinton: Israel-Jordan treaty is a crucial step for comprehensive peace

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — Returning home from a week of shuttle diplomacy in the Middle East, President Bill Clinton on Saturday pledged an ongoing U.S. commitment to fostering peace in the region, declaring, "the peacemakers are the future."

Mr. Clinton, who spoke briefly at a White House arrival ceremony, said the peace treaty signed between Israel and Jordan represented "a crucial step on the road to a comprehensive peace in the Middle East."

And looking ahead to what remains to be done, he added: "The United States will continue to stand shoulder to shoulder with those who seek the peace, with those who take risks for peace, with those who stand up for change in the face of terrorists and extremists who seek to destroy the peace by killing the innocent."

"They cannot, they must not, they will not succeed,"

he said. "They are the past. The peacemakers are the future."

After an overnight flight home from Saudi Arabia, the final stop of his grueling five-day diplomatic trek, Mr. Clinton added with a smile, "it's been an exciting trip but it's great to be home."

The president made no reference to the mid-term elections coming up in little more than a week, but he clearly had them in mind as he spoke about the need to "continue to work for renewal at home."

"We've made a start in putting government on the side of ordinary Americans," he said, echoing a frequent Democratic theme. "We must turn from the past and embrace the future."

In his weekly radio address, taped Friday before he left the Middle East, Mr. Clinton argued that new evidence of robust economic growth should convince

Americans his policies represent "the path to the future."

He delivered the address at the tactical assembly area Liberty in the desert outside Kuwait City.

In Saudi Arabia, Mr. Clinton and Saudi King Fahd agreed that international economic sanctions against Iraq should not be lifted until Baghdad complies with the terms of all the U.N. resolutions enacted at the end of the Gulf war.

The two leaders said in a communique anything short of that would only encourage the regime of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein "to continue its aggressive policies and to flout the will of the international community."

Mr. Clinton and King Fahd also condemned "terrorist" acts and called for "widening the circle of peacemakers" in the Middle East, an apparent reference to efforts to persuade Syria to strike a

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Syria wants Israeli statement on withdrawal from Golan

DAMASCUS (Agencies) — Syria again urged Israel on Saturday to commit itself to withdrawal from the Golan Heights in response to Damascus' declared willingness to normalise relations with the Jewish state.

The official daily newspaper Tishrin said Syria did not beg for peace but Syrians were concerned that Israel had not made a public statement accepting a complete withdrawal from the Golan, seized by Israel in the 1967 Middle East war.

"Until now, Israeli leaders have given no sign of such a commitment. They are still talking about a phased withdrawal without even revealing the time length of its last stage," Tishrin said.

"Such an Israeli position certainly raises the fears of the Syrian government and people."

Syrian President Hafez Al Assad reiterated on Thursday after talks with U.S. President Bill Clinton in Damascus that Syria was ready to establish normal ties with Israel in return for full withdrawal from the Golan and South Lebanon.

Syria's three-year-old peace talks with Israel are stalled over withdrawal and future ties.

Israel says it wants normal relations including diplomatic ties, trade and an open border before it reveals the extent of a withdrawal.

"It is unreasonable that Syria should offer full peace in return for partial withdrawal. Manoeuvres by Israel during the implementation of the fragile Oslo agreement (with the Palestine Liberation Organisation) should be a real alarm bell," Tishrin said.

Syria has strongly criticised the peace deal between Israel and the PLO signed in Washington last year after secret talks in Oslo. The deal gave Palestinians limited self-rule in the Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho.

"Raising doubts about Syria's peaceful intentions has no aim but to cover Israel's rejection of full withdrawal from the Golan," Tishrin said.

In Moscow, sources said Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev is expected to hold talks in Damascus next week with President Assad.

The sources said Mr. Kozyrev would "very probably" travel to the Syrian capital Tuesday after attending a three-day Middle East

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Israeli settlers riot in Hebron

HEBRON, occupied West Bank (Agencies) — About 50 armed Jewish settlers went on the rampage in the centre of Hebron on Saturday, attacking Palestinians and their shops with sticks and stones, witnesses said.

Two Palestinians were slightly hurt and five shops were damaged, one said. Israeli troops intervened and arrested two settlers. The Israeli army said it was checking the report.

Earlier on Saturday, some 3,000 settlers prayed outside the Ibrahim Mosque in Hebron, closed by the army since the massacre of more than 30 Palestinians by a settler there in February.

Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) will try to give a new impetus to negotiations on extending Palestinian self-rule when they hold talks on the sidelines of Middle East economic forum in Casablanca in Sunday.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres will assure their fellow Nobel Peace Prize laureate Yasser Arafat that Wednesday's Israel-Jordan peace treaty was not reached at the Palestinians' expense, a government official said.

They will also inform Mr. Arafat that they will soon end the closure of the West Bank and the self-rule Gaza Strip, which has left 70,000 Palestinian workers in Israel unemployed, the official added.

The territories were closed

off indefinitely after a suicide bombing by Hamas on a Tel Aviv bus on Oct. 19 which killed 23 people.

Mr. Rabin and Mr. Arafat last met on Sept. 25 at the Erez crossing between Gaza and Israel, where they discussed the elections to an autonomy council that will run civil affairs in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

Negotiations in Cairo on the issue have made slow progress, with disagreement over the powers of the council and the size. The PLO wants it to act as a parliament, while Israel insists on a small administrative body without full legislative powers.

"Israel does not intend to go back on its commitments related to the self-rule agreement" signed with the PLO on September 1993, Mr. Peres told Israeli radio in Casablanca, Morocco.

Mr. Rabin, however, said matters relating to security in the deal should be modified.

"The agreement has contradictions and I know it will have to be corrected for it to be implemented. These changes are needed especially in the security area," Mr. Rabin told the Israeli daily Yediot Aharanot.

Mr. Peres said that Israel would try to bridge the gap with the Palestinians in the talks on the autonomy council elections.

The self-rule agreement provides for an Israeli rede-

Israel cautious on Mideast bank plan

CASABLANCA (Agencies) — Israeli Finance Minister Avraham Shohat expressed caution here Saturday about a proposed Middle East investment bank to be discussed at the Casablanca economic summit.

The bank with a capital of \$10 billion was proposed by Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres to finance development in the region, and was backed by U.S. President Bill Clinton during his Middle East tour.

But Mr. Shohat said certain conditions would have to be met to avoid the problems facing the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development for Eastern Europe, on which it would be modelled.

"Before setting up such a bank, it will have to be studied very carefully and cautiously first," the minister told AFP.

"I do not want Israel to make a commitment, especially to providing capital, before the study is complete."

Mr. Peres proposed that \$500 million of the bank's capital should be put up by Israel, the United States, Japan, the European Union and Arab countries.

But the finance minister, in this Moroccan city for the economic summit opening on Sunday, fears Washington might deduct its own contribution to the bank from U.S. aid to Israel, worth \$3 billion a year.

Mr. Shohat added that a development bank was "not the only solution" to invest-

ment in the region. "We could use a different financial tool for example, such as a joint fund for Middle East investment," he said.

A commitment to create a regional bank is expected to be announced in a declaration next Tuesday at the end of the Middle East and North Africa Economic Summit.

"Even if there is a joint declaration at the end of the summit, it will then be necessary to check who will make financial contributions, who will direct the bank and what type of loan it will give," Mr. Shohat said.

Despite Mr. Clinton's public backing last week, both on the Amman and Cairo legs of his regional tour, Mr. Shohat said that Washington too had set conditions for the bank.

The United States wants the bank to be headed by an American for the first two years and to lend at market rather than concessional rates, he said.

More than 1,000 politicians and businessmen from over 50 countries are taking part in the Casablanca conference, aimed at improving living conditions in the Middle East and North Africa.

It is the first time Israeli leaders and businessmen will have sat down with so many of their Arab counterparts.

But Mr. Shohat warned against inflated expectations of the forum. "There will certainly be no immediate concrete results,"

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هكذا منذ البداية

Turkish trucks pour into Iraq, ease sanctions

BAGHDAD (R) — Truck traffic between Turkey and Iraq is booming despite a four-year U.N. embargo on Iraq. Turkey's charge d'affaires in Baghdad said on Saturday.

The diplomat, Saadi Calislar, reacting to a story in a local newspaper, told Reuters up to 700 Turkish trucks were crossing into Iraq daily. But he said these carried only humanitarian supplies and did not violate U.N. sanctions for Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990.

The official Iraqi press has been portraying the growing traffic as signalling Western ally Turkey's impatience with the embargo against its neighbour and trading partner.

A report in the government daily Al-Jumhuriya quoting Mr. Calislar said on Saturday hundreds of trucks were entering Iraq from Turkey daily, carrying food and medicines in return for Iraqi diesel.

It quoted the diplomat as saying he expected the number of trucks doing trade with Iraq to more than double from up to 700 now to about 1,500 soon.

"We shall not succumb to American pressure and continue cooperating with Iraq," the paper quoted Mr. Calislar as saying.

But when contacted by Reuters, Mr. Calislar said: "That is not a statement I have given. It is a misquotation."

On the newspaper's figure of up to 700 Turkish trucks entering Iraq daily, Mr. Calislar said: "That is correct. That is known." But he said the trucks only carried humanitarian supplies permitted under the stiff regime of U.N. sanctions.

Mr. Calislar said Turkey was looking forward to the day sanctions will be lifted to resume its once lucrative trade.

Turkey was a key ally of the American-led military coalition that ejected Iraqi troops from Kuwait in the 1991 Gulf war.

But both officials and businessmen in Turkey say their country is hurting badly from the huge loss of revenue as a result of the prolonged sanctions.

Turkey says sanctions have crippled the economy of its southeastern region, mainly inhabited by a restive ethnic Kurdish minority.

Official statistics show that Iraq imported goods, mainly from Turkey's southeast, worth \$2-\$2.5 billion yearly before sanctions. Ankara also received about \$300 million a year in transit fees from Iraq's oil exports through its territory.

Turkish goods are visible in Iraq, including Baghdad markets where Turkish tyres, batteries and spare parts are prominent among other Turkish products on display.

Turkish trade with Iraq is conducted through Western-protected Kurdish rebels in northern Iraq, who control about 100 kilometres of the highway on the Iraqi side.

The flow of Turkish trucks looks certain to benefit the economy of the area, which is hit by double sanctions — from the Iraqi government and the United Nations.

Turks have paid transit fees to Kurds in the past and the levies are believed to be continuing.

Residents in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul, where the Turkish trucks unload, report big falls in prices of some foodstuffs. A resident contacted by telephone said sugar and flour were plentiful in the city and sold at a third of their price in Baghdad.

Mosul residents said Turkish trucks fixed extra tanks to their vehicles which they filled with cheap Iraqi petroleum products at a depot north of the city.

Mosul is Iraq's second largest city, 400 kilometres north of Baghdad.

Iraq on Friday called on France to open an interests section in Baghdad without delay to improve relations, following the recent crisis over Iraqi troops movements close to Kuwait.

Khaled Al Rashid Al Janabi, an advisor to President Saddam Hussein, told AFP the crisis early in October, when Iraqi troop movements led to fears that Baghdad was about to invade Kuwait for a second time, should "encourage and not slow down the establishment of such relations" with France.

"The absence of ways of exchanging points of view in this delicate period between the Iraqi leadership and France is regrettable," Mr. Janabi said. "We hope that an early solution can be found."



SAUDI HONOUR: U.S. President Bill Clinton base, northeastern Saudi Arabia late Friday, receives Saudi Arabia's highest award from Mr. Clinton left Saudi Arabia later at the end King Fahd of Saudi Arabia at Khalid Military of a six-nation Middle East tour (AFP photo)

Barzani seeks reconstruction aid

SALAHUDDIN, Iraq (R) — Kurdish leader Massoud Barzani said on Friday that western agencies had to become involved in reconstruction if the autonomous Kurdish region in northern Iraq were to sustain itself.

"The main problem is the economic situation, as we have inherited a destroyed country," Mr. Barzani said in an interview.

"If relief programmes are not changed to reconstruction programmes, we alone cannot solve the problems," said Mr. Barzani, leader of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP).

The party shares power 50-50 with Jalal Talabani's Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) in the administration of Kurdish-controlled northern Iraq, a zone above the 36th Parallel guarded by U.S. and allied airpower.

"We thank them (aid agencies), but their programmes are still relief programmes," he said. "If they change... to reconstruction and development programmes, then we may be able to stand on our own feet in two years."

Several aid agencies, including U.N. groups and the Turkish Red Crescent Society, have moved into northern Iraq since 1991, when the Western allies set up a safe haven in order to protect the Kurdish population from Iraqi government forces.

But pledges of donations from Western countries have

been on the wane and resources are spread thinly, providing only bare essentials.

"Our own focus now is concentrated on reconstruction of villages in order to improve people's lives and establish factories," Mr. Barzani said.

The democratic experiment in the north of Iraq was dealt a blow in May and again in August, when clashes broke out between KDP and PUK forces.

A ceasefire was agreed in August, in part through mediation by the Iraqi National Congress (INC), the umbrella opposition group challenging Baghdad.

But leading politicians, including Kosrat Rasoul, chosen as prime minister after Kurdish elections, believe many problems remain for the administration, in power for two-and-a-half years.

"An important reason for the fighting to break out was the duality of decision-making, with Talabani and Barzani making decisions outside of government and parliament," said Mr. Rasoul.

"This reason still remains. I have asked them to come into parliament, with one heading parliament and the other heading the government," he said. "I wish they would do this tomorrow."

Mr. Barzani said he did not know whether he would take up Rasoul's offer.

"Elections will solve the problem. They must take place," he said, adding that polls should pose no threat to neighbouring countries who fear they are another step toward a Kurdish state.

The KDP and the PUK have been unable to agree on elections so far, and the summer's clashes further undermined any such move. Parliament's term ends next May but there is no evidence of concrete steps to begin election preparations.

The Kurdish government in north Iraq says it cannot conduct the census necessary to hold proper polls without U.N. help.

Already, the local population is nervous that the United Nations might end its embargo against Baghdad, imposed for the 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

The massing of Iraqi troops near the Kuwait border earlier this month — and the strong response by Washington and its allies — reassured local Kurds that the Western powers and the embargo would be with them for some time yet.

However, Mr. Barzani believes the Kurdish-controlled north remains under serious threat from the government of President Saddam Hussein in Baghdad, making the region heavily dependent on aid and military protection.

"Saddam is a threat to the weak, not the strong," Mr. Barzani said.

Palestinian cleric assails Clinton

GAZA CITY (AP) — In a sermon at Gaza's largest mosque, a leading Muslim cleric attacked President Clinton Friday for his strong campaign against Islamic militants.

"Clinton aggressively attacked Islam in the land of Islam," Ismail Hanieh told more than 6,000 worshippers in Palestine Mosque in Gaza City.

He charged that Mr. Clinton was "using every means and policy to contain a creeping Islam... no superpower, whatever its strength or military might, no international media campaign can defeat or uproot Islam."

"This war is led by the head of the international state of aggression, the state of international colonialism, the United States, and its President Clinton who came to Arab capitals and Palestine and attacked the Islamic movement," Hanieh said.

During his three days in Jordan and Israel, Mr. Clinton repeatedly criticised the militant Islamic movements waging attacks against Middle East efforts to codetermine the agreements between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Israel and Jordan.

"We must stand against terror as strongly as we stand for peace, for without an end to terror there can be no peace," Mr. Clinton told Israel's parliament Thursday.

"Sometimes they pretend to act in the name of God and country, but their deeds violate their own religious faith and make a mockery of any notion of any honourable patriotism."

The militant Hamas movement claimed responsibility for three attacks in Israel this month, including a bus bombing in Tel Aviv that killed 22 people and a Palestinian suicide bomber.

Mr. Hanieh's remarks reflected a bitterness felt by many Palestinians over being virtually ignored during Mr. Clinton's Middle East tour. Mr. Clinton met PLO chief Yasser Arafat in Egypt, but made no stops in Gaza or any other Palestinian turf.

Mr. Arafat himself lashed out again at the Israel-Jordan peace treaty signed in Mr. Clinton's presence Wednesday, during a speech at Gaza City's Katibeh Mosque.

Palestinians are angry that Israel recognised Jordan's historic responsibility for holy sites in Jerusalem, a city demanded by Palestinians as capital of a would be state.

Alluding to the controversy which reportedly led Mr. Clinton to cancel a planned visit to Jerusalem holy sites, Mr. Arafat said that showed "the degree of the cruelty of the battle that we are waging for Jerusalem."

"Al Quds," he added, "is the capital of the Palestinian state regardless of those who like it or dislike it. We have to maintain the Palestinianism of Jerusalem, and its holy Islamic and Christian shrines."

The crowd of about 1,000 at the mosque, applauded him by shouting, "God is great."

Mr. Arafat's top negotiator with the Israelis, Nabil Shaath, bemoaned Israel's closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, which denies tens of thousands of Palestinians a livelihood by preventing them from reporting to jobs in Israel.

Israel imposed the closure after the Oct. 19 Tel Aviv bombing.

Clinton gives Syria new hope for peace

QUNEITRA, Syria (AP) — For two decades, Syrian Television retransmitted Khalil Amra shunned his razed home in this Golan Heights ghost town, which the Israelis destroyed after capturing it from Syria.

But he was back Friday, a day after President Bill Clinton's visit to Syria — the first by a U.S. president in 20 years — sowed new seeds of hope for a peace settlement.

"We expect it will give the peace process a push forward," Mr. Amra said, gazing out over barbed coils and a mine field at a lush Israeli settlement and mountaintop military surveillance post. "We hope there will be peace."

Mr. Clinton visited Syria during a six-country Mideast tour that included the signing of a peace treaty between Israel and Jordan. Only Syria and Lebanon, which is backed by Syria, have not made peace with their Israeli neighbour.

But after talks with Mr. Clinton in Damascus, Syrian President Hafez Al Assad promised to work for a peace that enables "both Arabs and Israelis to live in security, stability and prosperity."

Progress in the negotiations hinges on the Golan Heights, which Israel seized in the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. Syria wants it all back, but Israel first wants to be sure Syria's

longtime ruler means what he says. Quneitra was demolished in 1974 by Israeli forces as they withdrew after the previous year's October war. The Syrian government has preserved the rubble a monument to Israel's occupation of the Golan.

Government guides brought journalists here for a visit, as they frequently do. The hulks of concrete rubble under the shade of Quneitra's eucalyptus trees are also a tourist attraction — part of Mr. Assad's crusade to ensure his people don't forget their land was seized and is still held by the Israelis.

He succeeded. Peace with Israel will now be all the more difficult to sell at home after decades portraying the Israelis as ruthless occupiers.

"If they occupy my country then I must hate them," said Doha Al Taki, chaperoning elementary school students on a class trip "to see what the occupiers did."

Mr. Amra, seated on the rear balcony of the only open cafe in town — it offers an unvarnished view of the Golan Heights — said he looks forward to the day he can rebuild what was once "one of the richest cities in Syria."

"If there is peace, I will be back with all my children," said Mr. Amra, who has 11 of them.

Israelis say Clinton brought nothing new

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — After mulling over the message President Clinton brought from Syria, Israeli officials on Friday concluded that it contained little new.

Mr. Clinton and Secretary of State Warren Christopher apparently "are of the opinion that there has in fact been movement," said government spokesman Uri Dromi.

"But we have already heard all those things he (Assad) said."

Israel had expected that as a gesture to Mr. Clinton, Mr. Assad would make concessions for peace with Israel.

But Mr. Assad was vague, the officials said. "We did not hear any explicit words from Assad" about his vision of peace, said Mr. Dromi.

Even Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, who appeared willing on Thursday to give Mr. Clinton and Mr. Assad the benefit of the doubt, sounded plaintive in an interview with the mass circulation Yedioth Ahrooth Friday.

"I am not sure what Syria sees in peace. I am not sure when they are prepared to make normalisation with us, if at all," Mr. Rabin said.

Mr. Clinton insisted Thursday night that Mr. Assad "went beyond anything he said before" on making peace with Israel. "He made some statements in our private conversations about the details of this process which I would be wrong to discuss," Mr. Clinton told reporters pressing for details.

Some Israeli newspapers were sceptical.

They said Mr. Clinton failed to get Mr. Assad to agree to meet with Mr. Rabin or to raise the talks from ambassador to foreign minister level.

The daily Haaretz, however, said Mr. Assad told Mr. Clinton he was willing to accept an Israeli withdrawal period from the Golan Heights that would last longer than the one year it had

demand until now.

But Israeli officials said that before discussing any details of withdrawal they want to hear Mr. Assad spell out his acceptance of a peace treaty with trade, open borders and diplomatic relations.

Syria wants Israel to agree to a full withdrawal before normalisation can be discussed.

"He knows we are willing to conduct a significant withdrawal — he heard this from Rabin, from the Americans. It's now time that he fill his part of the deal," said Mr. Dromi.

Mr. Rabin told Yedioth: "Even if I would declare a full withdrawal, I am not certain that there would be an agreement."

Still, Mr. Rabin and his aides advised patience, and President Ezer Weizman said: "I think we shouldn't stand with a stopwatch."

Mr. Weizman said in an interview on Israel Radio that Mr. Assad must understand that Israelis are getting tired of waiting.

"I told him (Clinton)... that Assad does not talk to the people and until he understands this, things will not fall into place," Mr. Weizman said.

Israel was disappointed that Mr. Assad did not use his joint news conference with Mr. Clinton in Damascus on Thursday to clearly condemn "terrorism."

Palestinians also were upset, because their problems barely surface in speeches by Mr. Rabin and Mr. Clinton to the Israeli parliament Thursday night.

"I think that perhaps Rabin can ignore (Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat) but he can't make him disappear," said Ahmad Tibi, one of Mr. Arafat's top lieutenants.

Mr. Rabin will meet Mr. Arafat on Sunday in Casablanca, Morocco, where Israel is taking part in a first-ever conference on Mideast economic development.

Tehran warns Washington against tightening sanctions

NICOSIA (AP) — Iran cautioned President Bill Clinton against pushing for tighter sanctions against it, saying three previous U.S. administrations had tried but failed to tame the anti-American regime through such pressure.

Responding to efforts by the United States and Israel to isolate Iran for its staunch opposition to Arab-Israeli peace, the state-run Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) said Mr. Clinton should understand that times had changed.

"Clinton continues to repeat the errors of his predecessors, not knowing perhaps that his own situation for perpetuating Washington's past policies in that respect are less easy than they were for his predecessors," IRNA said in a lengthy dispatch late Thursday.

The agency said Iran "is now in better shape" than

before. Washington's efforts to isolate it economically and diplomatically are doomed to failure, it added.

Despite Iran's outward show of confidence, there is unease about U.S. intentions against it.

Iran has long opposed the presence of U.S. forces in the region. It blasted the United States for beefing up its forces in the Gulf after Iraq massed up to 80,000 troops, including two divisions of the elite Republican Guard, near the Kuwaiti border earlier this month.

On Thursday, Iran hinted for the first time that it saw those forces as a threat against its own security.

"Who are they threatening and who do they want to scare? They entered the region on the pretext of Iraq, but despite Iraq's capitulation they still remain in the Persian Gulf," said spiritual leader Ayatollah Ali

Khamenei.

"With an iron fist" Iran would smash any aggressor, he said during a visit to a shrine in southern Iran.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said "Muslim terrorism" led by Iran was the "enemy of peace." He called on Clinton to "stand at the head of the fight against this murderous terrorism."

Iran, which officially vows to annihilate Israel and "liberate all of Palestine," criticised Jordan for signing a peace treaty with Israel in a ceremony Wednesday attended by Mr. Clinton.

On Monday, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher singled out Iran as "the world's most significant sponsor of terrorism." He called on U.S. allies to curtail their economic dealings with Tehran.

"The threats by Washington against Iran, and its call on its allied nations to reduce

political and economic relations with Iran to a minimum are not new," said IRNA.

It warned that Iran was now less dependent on foreign countries, therefore Washington's "choice to restore that same scenario" of economic sanctions was "markedly ill-timed."

The United States severed ties with Iran after militants stormed the U.S. embassy in Tehran 15 years ago and held 52 Americans hostage for 444 days.

Ever since, Washington has officially maintained an economic embargo against Iran. In recent years, however, the U.S. resolve has slipped. It is Iran's fourth-largest trade partner, with most business being conducted through third countries.

This year the Iranians succeeded in rescheduling more than \$10 billion in foreign debts. Germany, Japan and a string of other European

countries ignored U.S. objections to giving Iran some badly needed breathing room.

The rescheduling of the debts, said IRNA, was Iran's guarantee of continued economic ties with Europe and Japan, and "a trump card Iran has in its dealing with the United States on the international scene."

At home, however, the Iranian economy is in the doldrums and the government is flailing. It has stopped short of officially announcing an austerity programme. But imports have been slashed and hard currency remains in short supply.

Last September, Mr. Clinton tightened the screws on Iran by extracting a promise from Russia, Iran's largest arms suppliers, to cease weapons sales to Tehran once existing contracts have been honoured.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

17:00 Alice Au Pays Des Merveilles
17:30 Montagne
18:00 Le Veni Des Moissons
18:30 News in French
18:45 Us huada
19:00 News in Hebrew
19:15 On Location
19:30 F.B.I. Untold Stories
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 You Bet Your Life
21:10 Sherlock Holmes — The Golden Years
22:00 News in English
23:10 Fly By Night

PRAYER TIMES

04:27 Fair
05:45 (Sunrise) Dubai
11:19 Dhuhr
14:26 Asr
16:54 Maghrib
18:12 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Swethel, Tel. 810730
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 62785.
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590.
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 627440.

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terrace Church Tel. 622366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541.

Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628343.

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331.

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 778261.

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 625226.

German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 684195.

The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932.

Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691.

The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Moderate weather conditions will prevail with a chance of thunder showers and winds variable becoming northerly westerly moderate.

In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate with a chance of showers and sea calm.

Min/Max temp.

Amman 13/26

Aqaba 18/30

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Deserts 10/27

Jordan Valley 10/27

Yesterday's high temperatures:

Amman 27, Aqaba 29 Humidity

readings: Amman 40 per cent,

Aqaba 48 per cent.

USEFUL

TELEPHONE

NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Nidal Al'ad 751672

Dr. Isam Al'Asmar 840594

Dr. Riza Abu Zaid 842958

Dr. Youssef Sammour 615648

Firas pharmacy 661912

Fendous pharmacy 773336

Al Asena pharmacy 637055

Nairoh pharmacy 62672

Nairoh pharmacy 62672

Najib pharmacy 847632

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Firas pharmacy 661912

Fendous pharmacy 773336

Al Asena pharmacy 637055

Nairoh pharmacy 62672

Nairoh pharmacy 62672

ZARQA:

Dr. Samir Al'Lawzi 989601

Khalil pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111

Civil Defence Department 661111

Fire Brigade 671101

Recruit 630341

Civil Defence Emergency 199

Oman, Spain and Indonesia congratulate Jordan on treaty Japan pledges continued assistance

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein Saturday received a telephone call from Sultan Qaboos of Oman congratulating him on the signing of the peace treaty with Israel last Wednesday, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said.

Sultan Qaboos and the King exchanged views over the general situation in the region and Omani-Jordanian relations.

King Hussein also received a call from King Juan Carlos of Spain congratulating him on the signing of the Jordan-Israeli peace treaty, according to Petra.

The Spanish monarch expressed hope that the Jordanian people would reap the fruits of peace, and wished the Kingdom further progress and prosperity under the leadership of King Hussein, the agency said.

Indonesia, current chairman of the 111-member Non-Aligned Movement, has welcomed the peace treaty signed between Jordan and Israel last Wednesday.

"The government of In-

donesia warmly welcomes the peace treaty between Jordan and Israel... which ends more than 46 years of hostilities between the two countries," the foreign ministry said in a statement made available on Saturday.

Indonesia hoped the agreement would push all parties in "the Arab-Israeli problem" towards a complete peace settlement, it said.

Indonesia, the world's largest Muslim country, has no diplomatic relations with Israel.

A statement issued by the chief cabinet secretary of the government of Japanese Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama said:

"Japan heartily welcomes the signing of a peace treaty by Israel and Jordan, and regards it as one of the pillars for peace and stability in the Middle East. Japan highly values the efforts made by the two parties in achieving the signing of the treaty after their active engagement in the peace negotiations of the ongoing peace process."

A statement from the embassy of Japan in Amman

quoted the secretary as saying:

"Japan has consistently maintained that a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East should be achieved, based on United Nations Security Council resolutions 242 and 338. Japan sincerely hopes that the negotiations between Israel and Syria and those between Israel and Lebanon will make progress as soon as possible, given an impetus by the recent achievement."

It added that "Japan intends to continue its assistance for the peace process by urging peace efforts by the parties concerned, by participating in the multilateral negotiations, and by extending economic assistance to the Palestinians and to the regional countries."

The government of Chile congratulated Jordan on the peace treaty saying that this step manifests the will of peace and cooperation of the governments of Israel and Jordan, according to a statement from the embassy of Chile in Jordan.

11 people injured in road accident

AMMAN (J.T.) — Eleven people were injured in a road accident on the Queen Alia International Airport highway late Friday evening, according to the Civil Defence Department (CDD) Saturday.

A CDD official said that the passengers injured were on a public transport bus, heading towards Amman, which overtook another car and hit an oncoming steam roller.

The official said that most of the injured suffered bruises and fractures but were not in serious condition. The injured were transported by CDD men to Al Bashir government hospital in Amman, except for Khader Jaffar a passenger who was described as being in serious condition who was transported to the King Hussein Medical Centre for treatment.

Meanwhile, the Public Security Department (PSD) said in a report published Saturday that 23-year-old man identified only as M.M.A., from the Prince Rasheed district of Amman, shot and killed himself. The public prosecutor and a team from the criminal laboratory at the PSD were investigating the case. The body was taken to Al Bashir Hospital for autopsy.

The PSD said that Al Bashir Hospital also treated a 43-year-old man, identified as A.M.A., who was reported to have swollen a large amount of pills in a suicide attempt.

The PSD said the man was in serious condition and could not be questioned by the police who are holding an investigation.

The PSD said over the past 48 hours a total 19 people received treatment at hospitals in Amman, Aqaba, Zarqa and Salt, 11 of whom suffered from food poisoning. Nine of the food poisoning cases were in Aqaba, treated at Princess Haya Al Hussein Hospital.

University students march in support of peace treaty

UNRWA staff send cable of support to King

AMMAN (J.T.) — Students at the University of Jordan Saturday staged a march in support of the Kingdom's peace treaty with Israel signed last Wednesday.

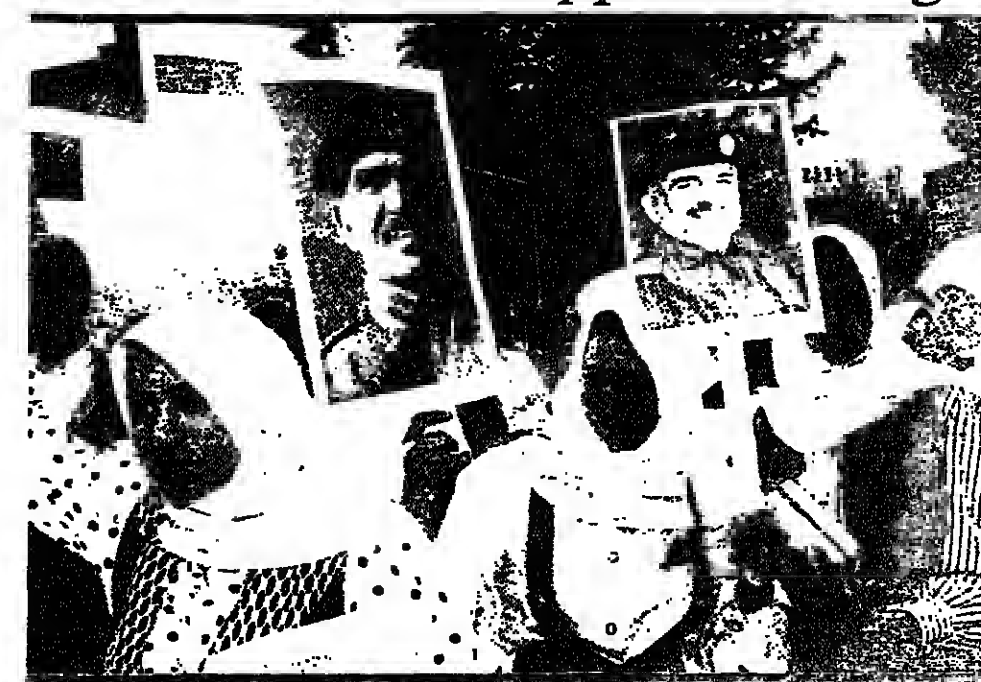
Raising placards, some bearing portraits of His Majesty King Hussein, about 3,000 students marched through the campus chanting slogans in support of King Hussein's policies and reaffirming their allegiance to the Hashemite Throne.

The marchers stressed their full backing for the peace process, paying tribute to King Hussein for his endeavours which resulted in the restoration of lost territory and water rights.

After the march, several student leaders delivered speeches expressing their full support for Jordan's positions and for the peace treaty.

The students rally at the university followed demonstrations held on campus Monday and Tuesday against the signing of the peace treaty. During those marches, demonstrators burned U.S. and Israeli flags, and shouted Anti-American and Anti-Israeli slogans.

Meanwhile, the Jordanian Writers Association (JWA) sent a cable to King Hussein voicing support for his steps towards establishing peace



University of Jordan students Saturday march on campus in support of His Majesty King Al Hussein and the signing of the peace treaty

and congratulating him on the treaty with Israel. The cable, signed by JWA Chairman Diauddin Rifai, said that the peace treaty has safeguarded Jordan's dignity by restoring its usurped lands and water rights.

The King Saturday received another cable of sup-

port from United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) employees. The cable voiced complete support for the King, who it said has reached a just and honourable peace, ensuring the return of Jordan's rights.

Civil Defence Department (CDD) Director Afif Al

Ghoul sent a cable to King Hussein reiterating the CDD staff's total allegiance to and support for the King's peace efforts and congratulating him on the peace treaty.

Mr. Ghoul's cable said the treaty was certain to establish security and stability for the country and its people.

DEF chief refutes claims that most borrowers default

AMMAN (J.T.) — Director of the Development and Employment Fund (DEF) Ali Jaddou has refuted claims that the majority of people who had received loans from his office to start a business were unable to pay back the loans.

In an interview with the Sawt Al Shaab daily Saturday, Jaddou said 80 per cent of the projects for which loans were granted have been reported to be operating successfully, and it was estimated that 90 per cent of the borrowers have been repaying the loans regularly in instalments.

"We charge a 6.5 per cent bank interest on the loans we offer to heads of families and others starting a business, and the loan ceiling is JD 20,000," said Mr. Jaddou.

The DEF director was responding to claims by farmers and sheep breeders who said that they had lost their herds in floods and other disasters and were unable to pay back their debts.

The paper, which quoted several farmers as complaining about the situation, said one of the beneficiaries of the DEF loans, Faeq Moham-

mad Muhsen, the head of a 14-member family, was originally a farmer and had borrowed JD 8,000 and bought equipment, including a cement mixer, to begin a small scale construction business. Mr. Muhsen said he has not done well and was not earning sufficient income to pay JD 70 a month to the DEF in repayment of his loan and not enough to feed his family.

Mohammad Samman told Sawt Al Shaab that he had borrowed JD 3000 to start a poultry farm and was required to make repayment instalments of JD 54 a month. But he said that the project failed as a result of high production costs and animal feed prices.

Mr. Jaddou said the DEF, which was established in 1992 to grant loans to heads of families, usually studies each and every project and asks for a guarantor or a sponsor to ensure that the borrower will pay back the loan.

He said the DEF does not have a policy of writing off any debt, but could reschedule the payments for those who face severe circumstances.

So far, he said, the DEF has granted loans to 1,400

projects run by individuals, and the total loans amount to JD 7,248,330. He added that these projects created 3,416 new jobs.

The DEF also granted JD 1,046 million in loans to 31 projects carried out by groups of beneficiaries, creating 638 new jobs, said Mr. Jaddou.

He said the projects are in farming, tourism, handicraft work, livestock, poultry farming and others, and the loans were granted directly to the beneficiaries or through the Queen Alia Fund for Social Development (QAF) with which the DEF has been cooperating in granting loans and in assessing projects.

Mr. Jaddou said that beneficiaries are usually graduates of universities or vocational centres who are unemployed and who wish to start a business, or heads of families and farmers who want to begin a family business like a store or a farm.

Referring to unsuccessful projects, Mr. Jaddou said the DEF has found that most of them meet this fate because their owners fail to give sufficient attention to the business or entrust their business to unskilled persons.

Jordan asks U.N. to set up information centre

NEW YORK (Petra) — Jordan has asked the United Nations to establish a U.N. information centre in Amman to contribute towards further efforts towards peace in the region.

Addressing a meeting of the special U.N. Committee to end colonialism, Fuad Batayneh, a member of the Jordanian permanent delegation to the United Nations, said that the Jordanian government plans to follow up on the proposed centre with the concerned committees at the U.N. information department.

Jordan, which participates in several U.N. peacekeeping

missions around the world, has just concluded a peace treaty with Israel in further manifestation of the country's determination to give momentum to the Middle East peace process, said Mr. Batayneh.

Justifying the Kingdom's request for a centre to be established in Amman, Mr. Batayneh said that a new international environment has emerged as a result of the development in relations among nations of the world, adding that new information bases are required to deal with the nascent situation, enabling information to flow both ways and not only from

the advanced to the developing nations.

Underlining the importance of information in promoting social, cultural and political cooperation among countries, Mr. Batayneh said that free flow of information material is a vital tool for sustainable development, democracy and a lasting peace.

Noting that Jordan is among the largest contributors to the U.N. peacekeeping forces serving around the world, Mr. Batayneh said, that these missions should be expanded and the U.N. information centres should

focus the world community's attention on the significant role these peacekeepers play.

Meanwhile, in Cairo, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Talaat Al Hassan said in an interview that Jordan was planning to resume negotiations with Israel for the sake of normalising bilateral relations and implementing the various provisions of the peace treaty the two sides signed last Wednesday.

In a statement to Sawt Al Arab Radio, Mr. Hassan said Jordan has benefited from the treaty by regaining sovereignty of all its territory and in having its boundaries demarcated.

Conscious of shortcomings, government places 'high priority' on tourism industry

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The pressing need to develop Jordan's tourism industry through expanding facilities, particularly the availability of hotel rooms, could not have been driven home better than when many of the hundreds of foreign guests and journalists attending the signing of the Jordan-Israel peace treaty in the south last week could not find a place to stay overnight.

Indeed the signing of the treaty was a rare occasion that invited a crowd of that magnitude to Aqaba. But then, the shortage of facilities for tourists had always been a dissuading factor in Jordan's efforts to develop its tourism industry, one of the key sectors that are expected to witness a boom in the state of peace that Jordan has achieved with Israel.

The signing of the treaty also means an inflow of Israeli tourists, for whom the attractions of Jordan, particularly the ancient ruins at Petra, have always held a mysterious fascination.

Obviously conscious of the shortcomings in the tourism industry, it is one of the areas that Jordan has given high priority in its development requirements.

An ambitious programme drawn up by the Ministry of Planning in coordination with the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities calls for massive projects to upgrade and expand all available tourism facilities in Aqaba, Petra and the Dead Sea area.

Estimated to cost \$800 million, the project for Aqaba involves construction of new hotels/motels to make available 3,000 new rooms in the next few years to add to the present 1,200 rooms available in the Red Sea port city. That compares with the nearly 9,000 rooms available at Aqaba's Israeli counterpart, Eilat.

Fayez Khasawneh, head of

the Aqaba Regional Authority (ARA), said in a recent interview with Jordan Television that he expected 1,200 to 1,500 more hotel rooms to be available in Aqaba in two to three years.

Dr. Khasawneh referred to the vacant plots available along the Aqaba coastline as well as away from the beaches as potential areas where hotels could be built.

The Aqaba master plan, as presented to the Middle East/North Africa Economic Summit opening in Casablanca, Morocco, on Sunday, says it also aims at expansion of sport and recreational facilities.

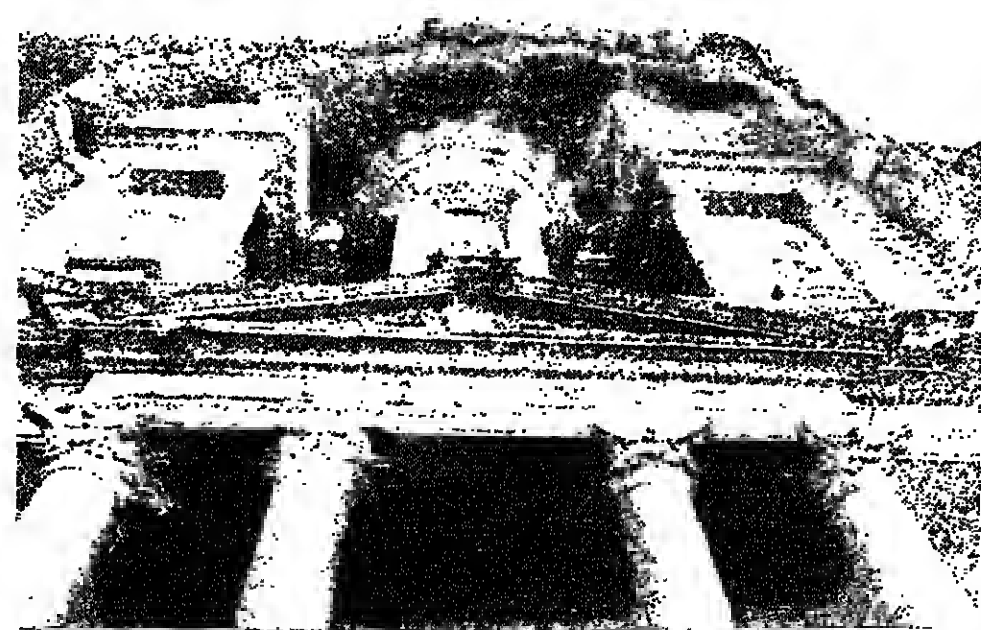
The project, categorised as "high priority," needs a feasibility study as well as detailed designs.

One of the often heard proposals is to make the entire Aqaba area a duty-free zone. Pros and cons of the proposal have been discussed in the media, but the precise status of the plan in government thinking is not yet known.

The second project, also classified as "high priority," involves developing the tourism facilities available in and around Petra, the ancient rose-red Nabatean city which is often described as the jewel in Jordan's tourism crown.

"With the new development resulting from the post-peace era, the number of tourists visiting Petra is bound to almost triple or even more," says the Jordanian presentation to the Casablanca conference, which will be attended by heads of state and government from nearly 50 countries in addition to senior executives from 1,100 regional and international companies.

The expected increase in the flow of tourists to Petra, says the document, needs not only an increase in hotel accommodations but also the expansion of other complementary tourist facilities in addition to improvement



Petra's famous treasury (file photo)

and restoration.

The \$300 million project proposal calls for an additional 1,000 hotel rooms in the Petra area, and modernisation and expansion of support services such as restaurants, public spaces, parking lots and public baths.

Independent sources say that the government has issued nearly a dozen licenses for new hotels in the Petra area as well as neighbouring Wadi Musa town. The issuance of new permits has been frozen, pending what Minister of Tourism Mohammad Adwan said last month was the implementation of the master plan.

Also included in the project is an improvement of the famous one-kilometre long, winding "Siq" — the awe-inspiring fissure between overhanging cliffs that leads into Petra.

The project also needs a feasibility study and detailed designs.

In the Dead Sea area, the government envisions not only constructing hotels that will add 1,500 hotel rooms but also expanding the therapeutic clinic facilities. In a

way, that will be taking a leaf out of the Israeli experience on the western side of the Dead Sea where hotels and spas offer health care facilities, including a special facial treatment with Dead Sea mud that is believed to remove all skin aberrations — a highly popular method that attracts thousands of European and American women to Israel.

At present, there is a four-star hotel on the Jordanian side of the Dead Sea. In addition, there is a similar facility over the hills to the east — the Zarqa Ma'in hot springs, which has now been developed as a health spa, offering therapeutic facilities.

The fourth component of the expansion in the tourism industry is an all-embracing one that involves restoration and conservation work at selected ancient historic and touristic sites.

"These sites are spread all over the Kingdom and include monuments for the mysterious desert castles, forts, towers, baths, caravan inns and fortified palaces," the Jordanian presentation to the Casablanca summit

notes.

It refers to the medieval castles of Karak, Shobak, Ajloun, Qasr Amra, Qasr Kharaneh, Qasr Hallabat, the Wadi Rum Cliffs, Jerash, Pella, Umm Qais, Abila and Umm Al Jimal as well as the Byzantine and Umayyad mosaics in Madaba and the wild life conservatory in the northeast.

This \$50 million project needs a feasibility study and detailed designs.

Upgrading museums and tourist areas in Madaba, Karak, Shobak, Tafleeh, Irbid, Jerash and Amman is another project envisaged by the government.

In addition to renovating museums and upgrading schemes for museums, the \$72 million project involves developing existing and construction of new infrastructure facilities such as access roads, water and waste water networks, public rest houses, recreational facilities and public parking services.

The project would entail a master plan for the entire Kingdom, with detailed feasibility studies of each component.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

King congratulates Turkey

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Saturday sent a cable to Turkish President Suleiman Demirel expressing his good wishes on Turkey's national day. He wished the president continued happiness and the Turkish people further progress and prosperity.

Princess Basma meets women's groups

MA'AN (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Saturday visited Maan and Aqaba to attend meetings by local women's groups who formed committees which take part in the activities of the Jordanian National Committee for Women. Addressing the meetings in Ma'an, the Princess said that the committees were needed to help cater to the needs of women, promote their status and assist them in achieving their aspirations. "We have a long way to go and we have to work hard to overcome the difficulties," said Princess Basma.

Teachers start 5-day workshop

AMMAN (Petra) — One hundred teachers Saturday started a workshop at the Queen Zein Al Sharaf Complex to discuss comprehensive education. Organised by the United

Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, the five-day workshop will discuss various activities for school children inside the classrooms as well as vocational work and new trends in training students.

RSCN teams begin wildlife surveys

AMMAN (Petra) — The Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN) Saturday said that its teams of experts and researchers working in cooperation with researchers from the Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST) are currently conducting field surveys at Dana and Wadi Araba areas. Their task, said a society statement, is to determine the type and number of mammals that used to live in the two areas, which also were home to the Arab tiger and the desert fox. The five-month survey is financed by the World Bank.

NMC student to play in Cairo festival

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan is taking part in a music festival to open in Cairo on Tuesday. Salahuddin Maraqa, a student at the National Music Conservatory of Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF), will take part in the festival, playing the Qanoun, an Arab string instrument.

WHAT'S GOING ON

ITALIAN FILM FESTIVAL

- * Film (in Italian with subtitles in English) entitled *Il Ladro di Bambini* (Stolen Children) at the Royal Cultural Centre at 5:00 p.m.
- * Film (in English) entitled *"Il Sole Anche Di Notte"* (The Sun Even by Night) at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

FILM

- * Film entitled *"Dawn of the Dead"* at the American Center at 5:00 p.m. (No one under seventeen will be admitted).

PLAY

- * Play for children (in Arabic) entitled *Hakaya Abn Al Ajab* (Strange Stories) at the Royal Cultural Centre at 5:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

- * A special exhibition of "Polluted City — the Monuments" at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- * Exhibition of oil paintings by Iman Khaled and Fawzi Rasoul at Baladna Art Gallery.
- * Art exhibition by Olla Beseio and an exhibition of Arabic calligraphy at the Phoenix Gallery for Culture and Art.
- * Exhibition of textiles artistry and patchwork by Tuulikki Haddadin at the Gallery located at the Jordan Inter-Continental Hotel.
- * Exhibition entitled "Spanish Modern Engraving and Multiplied Sculpture" at the Jordan National Gallery, Jabal Lweibdeh (Tel. 630128).
- * The First Computer Art Exhibition in the Arab World at Ain Art Gallery.

French order new probe on Longuet

PARIS (R) — French judicial authorities ordered new probes Saturday in an investigation which forced industrial Minister Gerard Longuet to resign this month, focusing on a suspected funding network for his Republican Party (PR).

Mr. Longuet issued a statement denying any wrongdoing.

The Justice Ministry said the probes, to be launched Monday, involved several companies and allegations Mr. Longuet underpinned for work on his private villa in Saint-Tropez on the French Riviera.

The move targeting Mr. Longuet's PR, a member of the centre-right government coalition, is another deep embarrassment for Prime Minister Edouard Balladur.

Mr. Longuet was forced to resign on Oct. 14 in a probe into the funding of the PR and of his private villa.

A ministry statement said the new checks target among others the firm Investel, a holding company Mr. Longuet created in 1989 and sold in 1991. He is suspected of using it to conceal huge cash sums paid by firms seeking public contracts.

Other firms targeted are

management consultants Avnir 55, created in 1987 and sold in 1993 and holding company La Financiere, in which Mr. Longuet held a stake.

Judicial sources said both Mr. Longuet and individuals including the builder of his villa would probably be investigated.

Longuet's statement said accusations of wrongdoing were baseless and that he had paid the going market price for his villa.

France-Info radio quoted him as saying the opening of the probes would allow him to confirm this beyond any doubt.

Police last Monday presented to prosecutors results of their preliminary probe on alleged corruption involving Mr. Longuet.

The newspaper Le Monde said that the probe into PR finances uncovered a covert international funding network which had banded close to 100 million francs (almost \$20 million).

The investigation is among several corruption probes which have plunged Mr. Balladur's government into its worst crisis since it came to power in March 1993, when voters threw out a socialist government itself under-

mined by graft scandals. A front-runner for next year's presidential election, Mr. Balladur has seen his popularity slip in recent weeks.

Socialist European Commission President Jacques Delors has drawn level in the undeclared presidential race. In a twist to the Longuet case, authorities ordered a probe Friday into the bugging of his office telephone.

Maintenance technicians found a microphone the size of a sugar cube inside a floor plug connecting Mr. Longuet's personal line at his office in the Lorraine Regional Council, which he heads, in Metz in eastern France.

Meanwhile a court Friday ordered the arrest and investigation of an aide to ex-finance minister Robert Pandraud in a fraud case, state radio said.

The case involves funds suspected to have been channelled to the Gaullist Rally for the Republic (RPR) party.

Radio France-Info said Remy Halbwax, former head of a police trade union, was ordered arrested by an instructing magistrate and was

being held at Fresnes Prison outside Paris.

Officials were not immediately available for comment but Mr. Pandraud, who is close to Gaullist leader and presidential hopeful Jacques Chirac, was quoted by French television as saying he was surprised by his aide's arrest.

Mr. Halbwax is the 10th person placed under investigation since the case broke last month. Judicial sources say it involves suspected pay-offs to RPR party officers by construction firms in the Paris area in exchange for contracts. Mr. Chirac is Paris mayor.

Mr. Halbwax's imprisonment follows the rejection by a Lyon court of a plea to free former Communications Minister Alain Carignon, another RPR member, now in custody in a sleaze investigation involving municipal corruption in Grenoble where he is mayor.

In yet another joint to the scandal-plagued government of Mr. Balladur, the Appeals Court in Lyon ruled Mr. Carignon should stay in detention indefinitely in a corruption and fraud probe. He has been held since Oct. 12.



Lieutenant General Khin Nyunt (left) a member of Burma's ruling junta, meets with Burmese dissident Aung San Suu Kyi. It was the second meeting between the two since Ms. Suu Kyi was put under house arrest in July 1989. This picture was taken off Burmese television (AFP photo).

Burmese junta, Suu Kyi meet again

RANGOON (R) — A second, prominently publicised meeting between detained dissident Aung San Suu Kyi and Burma's military leadership surprised residents in the capital despite strong rumours that more talks were imminent.

State radio newspapers Saturday devoted far greater space to the three-hour meeting Friday than when the two sides first met unexpectedly in Sept. 20.

"I could not resist clapping my hands at the sight," one elderly man said, when state television showed a smiling Suu Kyi meeting Lieutenant General Khin Nyunt, secretary one of the ruling State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC).

Also present at the "frank and cordial" talks in a military guest house in Rangoon were armed forces judge advocate general, Brigadier General Than Oo, and armed forces inspector general, Brigadier-General Tin Aye.

"It was high time they met. Even the Jews and Arabs have reached agreement," the same resident said, apparently referring to peace accords between Israel and Jordan and Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation.

Wearing a blue traditional blouse and sarong, Suu Kyi,

49, daughter of Burmese independence hero General Aung San, looked healthier and more relaxed than one month ago.

"She looked prettier," one television viewer said.

The talks in September were the first time Ms. Suu Kyi had appeared in public since July, 1989, when the military-backed government placed her under house arrest in Rangoon.

Married to a British academic, Ms. Suu Kyi was prominent in a pro-democracy uprising in 1988 which was suppressed with substantial loss of life.

The SLORC ignored the landslide victory won in a 1990 general election by the National League for Democracy (NLD) which she co-founded, but in recent weeks has indicated it was prepared to open dialogue with Ms. Suu Kyi, the 1991 Nobel peace laureate.

As well as television and radio reports Friday night, the Burmese language Mirror newspaper devoted most of its front page on Saturday to a report and pictures of the meeting.

The English-language New Light of Myanmar carried a front-page, three-column spread and three pictures — considerably more than in September.

Burmese television said Friday's discussions were frank and cordial, and covered the current political and economic situation of the country.

They also concerned "the political and economic reforms which the SLORC is in the process of implementing, as steps that should be taken with a view to the long-term welfare of the nation," the station added.

Rangoon-based diplomats contacted by Reuters from Bangkok said the media treatment of the second meeting was significant.

Diplomats also said the presence yesterday of the armed forces inspector-general and advocate-general could mean the dialogue was getting down to a working level.

In September, Ms. Suu Kyi had met only military intelligence chief Khin Nyunt and SLORC Chairman General Than Shwe.

"I think this is more than show. It looks as if the SLORC really wants to come out of the impasse," one diplomat said of the second meeting.

Burma's neighbour Thailand, which follows a policy of "constructive dialogue" with the military junta, urged the Rangoon government in July to release Ms. Suu Kyi.

Russian border guards kill 20 Tajik rebels

DUSHANBE (AFP) — Russian border guards killed at least 20 Tajik rebels trying to cross into Tajikistan from Afghanistan, the commander of the Russian troops, General Anatoli Chechulin, said Saturday.

The clashes, which took place Friday and lasted four hours around the border post near the town of Kholog, in the Borno Badkhan area, in eastern Tajikistan, were the most serious violation to date of a ceasefire which came into force on Oct. 20.

The former Central Asian Soviet republic has been in the throes of civil war for two and a half years between a neo-Communist regime backed by Russia and an Islamic opposition based in neighbouring Afghanistan.

Friday's attack coincided with ongoing U.N.-mediated peace talks in Islamabad between the government and the opposition.

The U.N. mediator, Ramiro Piziz-Ballon told journalists in the Pakistan capital later Friday that the two sides had agreed to establish a U.N.-controlled corridor between Afghanistan and the Tajik province of Badkhan allowing food, clothing and medicine to be delivered to opposition forces.

And several of the women running for reelection have been targeted this year by well-heeled challengers — such as millionaire Michael

Russia has yet to become democracy — Solzhenitsyn

MOSCOW (R) — There is no democracy in Russia despite three years of post-Soviet reform, writer Alexander Solzhenitsyn told the country's parliament in the latest of a long series of savage criticisms.

The few — a corrupt, inefficient oligarchy — still rule and still ignore the sufferings their half-baked reforms have brought to the people they rule, he told restive deputies of the State Duma (lower house of parliament).

"This is not a democracy but an oligarchy — rule by the few," said the grey-bearded Solzhenitsyn, who returned from the United States this summer after 20 years of exile.

He has spent the intervening months stumping the country, trying to establish the real problems facing his homeland as it grapples with its transition to a free market economic system. No one in power was listening to the needs of the poor, he said.

"Having travelled through many Russian regions, after hundreds of meetings and thousands of letters, I have the feeling that the people are discouraged, in shock from humiliation and shame at their helplessness," he thundered.

"Ordinary people are in practice excluded from life. It all passes them by, the ugly choice they have to make is between eking out a shameful beggar's existence or (making a living by) deceiving the state and each other."

"They asked, they demanded, they persuaded and they begged me to speak out in the State Duma and to tell the president what's going on in the minds and hearts of the ordinary man," he said, to



Heir to the British throne Prince Charles chats with soldiers of the 1st Queens Dragoon Guards at the headquarters of the former British Army of the Rhine (BAOR) at Rheindahlen, near to Moenchengladbach (AFP photo).

Prince of Wales salutes last march of British Army of the Rhine

MOENCHENGLADBACH, Germany (AP) — Britain's Prince Charles presided over a festive farewell to the venerable British Army of the Rhine while a brass band played martial music.

The British force helped the United States and other allies keep the peace during the cold war and officially passed into history with Friday's ceremonies at the Rheindahlen Headquarters.

A crowd of about 350 people — most monarchy fans waving British flags — chatted about Prince Charles' behaviour toward his parents, his wife, Princess Diana, and whether or not he would ever become king, as they waited for him to emerge from the 19th-century stone town hall in the town of Moenchengladbach, near the Dutch border.

The prince's marital problems are the subject of new books.

The heir to the British throne, who smiled infrequently and appeared preoccupied during the military ceremonies, looked more chipper and waved from a red Jaguar when he was greeted by cheers at Moenchengladbach.

"Charles will never become king. If I were his mother, I would be bopping

mad about what he's done," said Inge Mucedowski, 52, a secretary who described herself as a fan of Prince Charles, although she likes Princess Diana better. "A king wouldn't do things like that," Ms. Mucedowski said. Apparently referring to the prince's acknowledged adultery, but also, perhaps, to his cooperation with a recent book that described his mother as cold and his father as a tyrant.

The prince shook hands with many in the crowd, and chatted with some, including a group of British girls studying aviation in Germany. Group leader Lynn Richardson, 31, of Birmingham, summed up her view of the Charles-versus-Diana controversy: "He's too nice. She's horrible."

Prince Charles' problems back home overshadowed his visit to the last parade of the 49-year-old British Army of the Rhine, created from troops who helped defeat Adolf Hitler. Since 1992, the force has been scaling down from a cold war high of 58,000 troops, and is expected to reach 25 by next April. The remaining troops are being renamed United Kingdom support command (Germany) to reflect their new role as part of NATO's

Rapid Reaction Force.

Prince Charles saluted members of the Queen's Royal Dragoon Guards, of which he is honorary colonel-in-chief, as they stood at attention with automatic rifles and fixed bayonets.

After arriving in the red Jaguar, Prince Charles took his place on a dais, sitting next to German Defence Minister Volker Rnebe, Britain's Defence Secretary, Malcolm Rifkind, and Gen. Sir Charles Guthrie, chief of the British general staff.

Prince Charles' short speech, partly in German, praised the British Army of the Rhine for helping to keep the peace in Europe.

"The momentous events in Russia, Central Europe and Germany have brought changes for all of us in Western Europe, almost all for the better," he said in German, with just a hint of a British accent.

Prince Charles spoke of the British army's professional standards, which "we have seen... over the years in Germany, particularly in Berlin and elsewhere."

"They are much in evidence today in Yugoslavia and they will almost certainly be required in the future, although obviously I cannot say where," he said.

U.S. women face tough reelection bids

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Women candidates will face tougher races in the midterm vote than they did in 1992's "Year of the Woman," but fundraising groups predict they will still have record wins this year.

Fewer open seats in the Nov. 8 vote mean more women will be running an uphill battle against incumbents, who always have an edge despite anti-incumbency sentiments.

And several of the women running for reelection have been targeted this year by well-heeled challengers — such as millionaire Michael

Huffington who has poured a record sum into his bid against California Senator Dianne Feinstein.

But the National Women's Political Caucus (NWPC) noted that despite the anti-Democrat mood, none of that party's women incumbents lost their primaries while four of the men were defeated in their nomination bids.

The number of women running — which beats 1992's record — also puts the numbers on their side.

"We expect there will be continuation of the kind of steady progress — slow

perhaps — that we've had for the past 20 years," said NWPC President Harriet Woods.

The bipartisan group which promotes women candidates predicted that the number of women will rise from 47 to 51 in the House of Representatives.

Twenty-four new women representatives and five senators were elected to their first term in 1992 thanks to anger over the Senate's handling of Anita Hill's sexual harassment charges against Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas and an abundance of open seats.

Bardot defends French rooster

PARIS (R) — A French court, spurning lobbying by Brigitte Bardot, has sentenced a 7,500 franc (\$1,450) fine the owners of a proud rooster after angry neighbours claimed its crowing offended cock belonging to Desbats family. Chateaufort-Les-Marais, a village near Marseille, after this week's verdict, sex-symbol turned animal rights activist sent a telegram to the Desbats urging them to "hang in there." The family needed little urging. Claude Desbats would never pay up. "If you banned Favaris from singing in an opera," he told the daily Le Parisien Friday. "If a cock can't sing any more in a rural area, I ask myself where is he supposed to express himself?" Faced against the Desbats in the rooster war is the local Association of Victims of Neighbourhood Nuisances, headed by a Monsieur Decocq.

Cleese: Working with De Niro is dangerous

LONDON (R) — John Cleese has warned his fellow comedians in Monty Python's Flying Circus that working with Robert De Niro could be lethal. Cleese, who made his name in the 70's Monty Python comedy series, plays opposite De Niro in Kenneth Branagh's Frankenstein which receives its world premiere at the London Film Festival next month. Cleese, told the Times newspaper: "I have a small part as a professor of anatomy who dabbles in the occult. And I get bumped off very early on by the De Niro character. I am the second python he has killed on screen. Michael Palin went first in Brazil. He is a dangerous man. Don't act with Robert De Niro."

Couple marry after meeting in police raid

LONDON (R) — A British couple who met when tied up by police during a drugs raid have married, the Daily Star newspaper reported Saturday. Truck driver Dominic McDonnell, 35, was playing pool and Cathy Snelson, 29, was waiting to meet a blind date when police raided the bar they were in at Heme Bay in southern England. They spent two hours chatting on the floor with their hands tied behind their backs before police decided they were innocent and released them. The couple had never seen each other before, but two weeks later Mr. McDonnell proposed and they married in July. "We didn't invite any of the police at the raid to our wedding," Ms. Snelson told the Daily Star. "But I suppose we should have done as they brought us together."

Hollywood ghosts said to roam on Halloween

HOLLYWOOD (R) — While witches and hobgoblins stalk the rest of the United States this Halloween, one Hollywood historian will be on the lookout for celebrity ghosts like Marilyn Monroe and Howard Hughes. Many may scoff at the idea of tinseltown's long-dead stars returning to their old haunts, but Laurie Jacobson — a TV producer and historian who has spent years researching the subject — is dead set on getting people to take it seriously. "I think spirits like to return to the places where they experienced happy times," says Ms. Jacobson, author of the new book Hollywood Haunted, which focuses on some of the town's most glamorous ghosts. "Spirits go back to places where memories are made," she says. Ms. Jacobson believes Marilyn Monroe's apparition may be caught next Monday night primping in front of her favourite full-length mirror in the historic Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel. Montgomery Clift's ghost may blow his bugle through the night at the same swanky hotel that he stayed in when working on From Here to Eternity. Not all of Ms. Jacobson's stories are as tame. In her book, she says the spirit of all-American 1950s TV father Ozzy Nelson has been known to pull back the covers and crawl into bed with female residents of his old house in the Hollywood Hills. The famed comedy store on Sunset Boulevard is a notorious hot spot for ghosts of a pack of mobsters who ran Ciro's Nightclub there in the 1940s and 1950s, says Ms. Jacobson.



Nobel Prize winner and Russian writer Alexander Solzhenitsyn addresses the Duma (lower chamber of parliament). This was Mr. Solzhenitsyn's first official statement after his return to Russia in May 1994 following 20 years of exile (AFP photo).

embarrassed shuffles and coughs from the chamber.

Deputies were no more pleased when Mr. Solzhenitsyn castigated them for failing to pass laws crucial to Russia's transition to democratic capitalism.

He told them not to fall into the trap of being more interested in the perks they could wring out of their jobs, and their quarrels with other branches of power, than in their duty.

"Power is not about getting things and not about pride, but about duty and obligations," he said.

And he demanded that local authorities be transformed into "zemstvos," the pre-revolutionary unit of local government, which he said would pay more attention to regional needs than the current local administrations.

But the conservative-dominated legislature clapped and cheered when the 74-year-old writer moved on to what has by now become a familiar litany of conservative complaints and demands for Russia's future transformation.

Deputies clapped when he said collective farms should not be sold to the new rich. "For that would mean selling off Russia itself."

They clapped when he said it was "national madness" to have allowed 25 million Russians who settled in other former Soviet republics to become stranded in what became instant foreign countries when the Soviet Union collapsed.

They clapped when he said the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), which replaced the Soviet Union in

1991, had been still-born. They clapped when he criticised the government for buying foreign grain.

And they clapped and cheered when he said Russia should draw back into its orbit the other two Slav states of the former Soviet Union — Ukraine and Belarus — as well as Kazakhstan, whose population was 60 per cent Russian.

Mr. Solzhenitsyn's searing descriptions of life in Soviet prisons earned him supreme moral authority during his exile as well as a Nobel Literature Prize. Among his works are One Day In The Life Of Ivan Denisovich and The Gulag Archipelago.

But his failure to return home after the end of Soviet rule in 1991 added a note of scepticism to popular feeling about him.



Former rebel commander Afonso Dhlakama Maputo before casting his ballot, hours after shows his ink-free hands to poll officials indicating he has not voted previously in

Mozambican electoral battle ends

MAPUTO (Agencies) — Mozambique's electoral battle for power between the country's former guerrilla chief and the incumbent president drew to a close Saturday as the last voters trickled to the polling stations.

The elections went into a third unscheduled day after ex-rebel leader Afonso Dhlakama bowed to international pressure and on Friday called off a last-minute boycott of the polls, agreeing to an enquiry into alleged fraud.

Many districts were reporting turnouts of more than 85 per cent by midday Saturday, radio and television reports said, and polling station officials suggested that voters who had not showed up yet were unlikely to come.

Some 6.4 million voters have been called out to vote for a president and a new parliament.

In the presidential race, incumbent Joaquim Chissano, who has ruled Mozambique since 1986, is expected to defeat the challenge by Mr. Dhlakama and his Mozambique National Resistance (RENAMO). There are 10 minor contenders for the presidency.

Apart from RENAMO and Mr. Chissano's Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO), 12 other parties or coalitions are vying for 250 seats in parliament to end the single-party reign of the former Marxist FRELIMO.

Foreign observers monitoring the poll said there had been many logistic problems in the impoverished south-west African nation, such as the late arrival of voting materials and lack of food and transport for electoral officials.

Voters complained mainly of long waits and in the northern Nampula province two women gave birth while queuing, but no serious incidents were reported to disrupt the voting, which was generally calm and orderly.

But the air was nevertheless still clouded by fears that the U.N.-supervised polls might not bring the lasting peace they are meant to achieve after more than 16 years of a civil war that cost a million lives.

Though Mr. Dhlakama called off his boycott Friday and was back in the race, he had by noon Saturday still given no definite assurance that he would respect the outcome of the elections should he and RENAMO lose.

Political analysts suggested that the 41-year-old Dhlakama, who emerged from the bush and signed a peace pact in Rome in October 1992, was less afraid of fraud than of losing to the veteran politician Chissano, 55.

The former guerrilla, who was in Maputo on Saturday awaiting the outcome of an enquiry he has demanded into alleged irregularities by the National Elections Com-

mission (CNE), said that he now had "confidence in the international community" to prevent fraud.

Mr. Dhlakama made his boycott announcement Thursday, casting a shadow over the whole process, but was pressured by Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe, other African leaders and Western ambassadors in Mozambique into changing his mind.

The U.N. special representative to Mozambique, Aldo Ajello, and the six Western envoys guaranteeing implementation of the 1992 peace pact pledged that Mr. Dhlakama's complaints would be thoroughly investigated before polling ended.

The presidential winner needs a majority of 50 per cent plus one and if enough votes are cast for other contenders to deprive the leader of that outright majority, a second round of elections should be held within five weeks.

The ballot count is due to begin immediately after the polls close at 6:00 p.m. (1600 GMT), but the CNE has up to 15 days to announce the final results.

The United Nations has deployed some 2,200 observers to monitor the vote, capping operations of the U.N. Operation in Mozambique (UNOMOZ) which has lately cost one million dollars a day.

SARAJEVO (Agencies) — Muslim-led Bosnian troops sneaked out of a fog-shrouded demilitarised zone in the mountains west of Sarajevo Saturday and attacked Bosnian Serb army positions near Savorak and Lukavac, a U.N. spokesman said.

The Bosnian Serbs, who have been waiting for weeks for the U.N. to clear the demilitarised zone (DMZ), were reported to be "incandescent with rage" over the attack, which was backed by 122mm cannon fire.

"At 0645 this morning the BiH (Bosnian Army) mounted an offensive by infiltrating in the south-southeast of the DMZ, supported by artillery fire," Major Herve Gourmelon, a spokesman for the U.N. Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in Sarajevo said.

"(French peacekeepers) have sent a couple of light armoured tanks into this area and have stopped 30 BiH soldiers."

Details of the Bosnian army attack were sketchy by Maj. Gourmelon said there were reports of Bosnian Serb Army (BSA) casualties.

Saturday's strike at the BSA marked the third time government troops have launched sneak attacks out of the U.N.-mediated zone in the past month — attacks in which about 30 Serb soldiers have been killed and 15 others wounded.

These successful commando raids have stunned Bosnian Serbs and seem to mark

a turning point in Bosnian army doctrine and practice. Denied heavy weapons by an international arms embargo, government troops had been largely on the defensive through 30-months of war, manning static trenches around the 30 per cent of Bosnia they still control.

Employing hit and run tactics suited to their light arms and Bosnia's rugged terrain, the BiH now seems to have decided to punish BSA troops with incessant contacts along 750 miles (1,200 kilometres) of front lines.

The BSA, believed to be strapped for fuel after neighbouring Yugoslavia sealed its border in August, may be baying a hard time moving its substantial arsenal of tanks and big guns into place to counter government probes.

U.N. officials say government troops captured 200 square kilometres of territory around Bihac in northwest Bosnia earlier this week and BiH generals say the infiltration of special forces teams were the key to that success.

"We infiltrated commando groups to destroy enemy artillery around Bihac and when the infantry pushed it was easier," BiH Brigadier-General Rifat Bilajac said.

"When we took Kula Vakuf (in the Bihac region), we sent commandos in and secured the town first and then the infantry took the villages between the front line and the town."

UNPROFOR has spent weeks trying to persuade

BiH forces to get out of the DMZ or risk destabilising the fragile ceasefire around Sarajevo.

A 45-minute firefight broke out between government troops and UNPROFOR forces in a disputed bit of the DMZ Monday, the most serious incident of its sort in the war.

Against this backdrop, Saturday's attack angered U.N. officials as much as it did the BSA. "We understand the BSA are incandescent with rage and we're not very happy either," said a U.N. official who asked not to be named.

"The BiH never should have reoccupied the DMZ once it was set up and they have made repeated commitments to withdraw in recent weeks, which they have failed to honour. Their general reliability as partners in the peace process is being called into question," the official added.

Bosnian Serbs are firing artillery and could be preparing a counter-offensive in the west of the country where they have lost 200 square kilometres of territory to government forces, a U.N. spokesman said here Saturday.

Increased shelling follows orders by Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic to his forces to launch a massive counter-attack in the region.

There had been no counter-attack so far, but Serb guns were active along the front, east of Bihac pock-

et and from where Muslim-led troops broke out this week to push back the Serbs, U.N. military spokesman Major Herve Gourmelon said.

The threat by Bosnian Serb forces to strike at Sarajevo and Bihac in reprisal for the successful government advance opened the possibility of renewed NATO air strikes against the Serbs.

On Friday, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and the U.N. agreed on new rules for air strikes which would be preceded by a political warning, but not a tactical one.

In effect, the U.N. on the ground would issue a general warning, but refrain from telling the targeted party where and when NATO planes would strike, as was previously the case.

The United States also called on the U.N. Security Council Friday to lift the arms embargo against the Bosnian government, but the proposal was expected to be defeated amid opposition from Britain, France, and Russia.

Mr. Karadzic ordered the Serb counter-offensive to go ahead "without account for the zones protected by the U.N.," adding that these areas "have become the springboard for attacks against the Serbs," according to a statement carried by Pale radio.

Bihac town and Sarajevo are two of six U.N.-protected enclaves which the Security

Council has pledged to defend by air strikes if need be. "Bihac is a safe-area. And obviously maintaining it as a safe-area becomes more difficult if there's a lot of fighting around it or from it," said U.N. spokesman Thant Myint-U.

In a warning, broadcast by Pale radio Friday, the Serb chief of staff, General Manojlo Milovanovic, had called on the U.N. to intervene to force government troops to halt an offensive out of Bihac and withdraw to positions occupied on Oct. 23.

Otherwise, "we shall be forced to carry out reprisals against those areas from which the attacks came," he said.

For their part secessionist Croatian Serbs were Saturday still blockading the only entry into Bihac in western Bosnia near the Croatian border around Maljevac, some 120 kilometres (75 miles) south-east of Zagreb, the commander of Bangladesh U.N. troops in the pocket Major Mohammad Beshir, told AFP.

The blockade, begun Friday morning, prevented a U.N. convoy from reaching Zagreb said Maj. Beshir, adding his men had been told the Croatian Serbs would maintain the blockade as long as the embargo against the Bosnian Serbs was not lifted.

He added that U.N. commander in Bosnia, Lieutenant-General Sir Michael Rose, was expected to go to Bihac on Nov. 3.

Macedonia opposition boycotts elections

SKOPJE (R) — Macedonian opposition parties urged their supporters to boycott a decisive second round of parliamentary elections Sunday and organised an unofficial protest vote.

Their leaders threatened Saturday also to refuse any seats in parliament after accusing the government of rigging President Kiro Gligorov's re-election in the first round of voting two weeks ago.

The three main opposition parties called on supporters to vote against the official elections at makeshift polling booths set up in town centres throughout the tiny southern Balkan republic.

All but 10 of the 120 parliamentary seats are at stake in the first elections since Macedonia became independent from former Yugoslavia in 1992.

"We will strip the regime of its democratic legitimacy," Democratic Party leader Petar Goshev vowed.

Ljubisa Georgievski, Mr. Gligorov's defeated challenger, said the boycott was organised "because what we have had is massive election fraud and forgery. They added a phantom 125,000 votes to enable Mr. Gligorov to win."

"We could not prevent that from happening but we do not have to be accessories to fraud this time round."

Foreign observers at the first round said there had been irregularities during the vote but not on a scale sufficient to invalidate the outcome.

"They were the result of incompetence by the authorities rather than corruption," said an observer who declined to be named.

The opposition — which had 38 seats in the last parliament — said thousands of names were missing from electoral rolls.

Mr. Gligorov promised security, continuity and consensus with Macedonia's minorities who include a large Albanian community.

His supporters accused the nationalist opposition, with its "Macedonia for Macedonians" slogan, of fanning confrontation.

Relations with the Albanians, who claim to make up 40 per cent of the population and want a bigger share of power, are sensitive. The government says they represent only 20 per cent but has not yet produced the results of a census taken in June.

Since becoming independent, Macedonia has been embroiled in a struggle with Greece over its name which has resulted in an economic blockade by Athens.

Once the poorest of the six republics in former Yugoslavia, its depressed economy suffers from the effects of the U.N. trade and oil sanctions against neighbouring rump Yugoslavia.

Sri Lanka cremates slain opposition leader

COLOMBO (R) — Sri Lankan opposition leader Gamini Dissanayake, killed by a suicide bomber while campaigning for the presidency, was cremated at Colombo's Independence Square Saturday before thousands of mourners.

Two of his nephews lit the funeral pyre in the presence of Mr. Dissanayake's widow Srma, picked by his United National Party this week to replace him as his candidate for the Nov. 9 poll.

Mr. Dissanayake, killed with 53 others Sunday by a blast at a campaign rally, was cremated on a three-tiered pyre covered with white cloth edged with green — the colour of his party.

Former speaker Haniffa Mohammad, who says Mr. Dissanayake's assassination was a conspiracy between the government and Tamil rebels, called for an official commission to probe the killing.

"This killing by (Tamil) terrorists is a barbaric act and a senseless action that has plunged the country into despair and grief," he said in a funeral oration.

The government has rejected Mr. Mohammad's allegations.

Government representatives, including Home Affairs Minister Amarasinghe Dodangoda who was to have spoken at the ceremony, failed to turn up, probably fearing



Elite police commandos perform a security check for possible bombs at the Independence Square before slain opposition leader Gamini Dissanayake was cremated with full national

honours. The capital has been brought under a tight security blanket for the funeral (AFP photo)

trouble from mourners. On Tuesday, Prime Minister Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga and cabinet ministers were abused by a hostile crowd when they went to Mr. Dissanayake's residence to pay their respects.

Earlier Saturday, Mr. Dissanayake's cortege made its way through a maze of streets clogged with silent mourners on a 90-minute journey to the cremation site.

The only sound on an otherwise quiet evening came from a helicopter which sho-

wered rose flowers — a mark of respect at Sri Lankan state funerals — on the procession. Police estimated that about 100,000 people took part, far more than attended the assassinated President Ranasinghe Premadasa's funeral in May 1993.

The capital was festooned with white flags, the traditional South Asian colour of mourning, together with banners and large pictures of the dead leader. The government lifted an evening curfew but retained the option of re-

imposing it. A military spokesman said the situation was calm. But security forces noticeably tightened security and police and soldiers patrolled the streets. No incidents were reported.

Police meanwhile sent the head and other fragmentary remains of the suspected female assassin to Scotland Yard for further analysis by British forensic experts. The woman is believed to have detonated explosives strapped to her body.

Aristide makes rare trip out of palace

PORT-AU-PRINCE (Agencies) — Haiti's restored President Jean-Bertrand Aristide left the presidential palace for the first time in ten days Friday evening under heavy U.S. military guard.

Mr. Aristide's trip, to his refurbished home just north of Port-Au-Prince, was only the second time he left the palace since he was returned to power two weeks ago after the United States sent in more than 20,000 troops to restore democracy to Haiti.

Mr. Aristide was hailed from his home by soldiers in 1991 when they ousted him and the house has been empty and untouched until workers started to renovate it last month.

Earlier the first step in Prime Minister-designate Suresh Michel's ratification stalled because he lacked a document necessary to assume office.

A six-man committee representing the Lower Chamber of Deputies told Mr. Michel Friday his ratification hearing could not go on without a document he received from the government when he resigned as commerce minister in 1991.

An aide to Mr. Michel said finding the paper would not be a problem and that the session would reconvene next week.

"He will have it on Monday," said the aide.

Mr. Michel must satisfy several constitutional requirements before being allowed to take office. Among other things, he must prove he is Haitian, that he has paid his taxes and that he is older than 35 years of age.

Mr. Michel, a 57-year-old businessman, was nominated by Mr. Aristide earlier this week for the politically powerful post.

If he fills the requirements he will return to answer deputies' questions at the open session to be held at a still undecided date.

A long-time friend of the president, Mr. Michel was expected to sail through the ratification hearings in the Senate and Chamber of Deputies.

Mr. Michel must also present his cabinet and a declaration of policies before both houses for a vote of confidence.

since his nomination, Mr. Michel has been meeting at home with advisors and friends to choose his cabinet and thrash out policy.

He has said his line up will include non-Aristide partisans, in keeping with the president's call for a consensus cabinet.

Meanwhile President Bill

Clinton, signing a congressional resolution on U.S. policy toward Haiti, said Friday he expects U.S. troops to leave there in a matter of months.

"The Haitian people no longer live in fear; they now have hope," Mr. Clinton said in a statement released by the White House press office while the president was en route home from a six-nation tour of the Middle East.

"We expect that within months, the bulk of our military personnel will leave Haiti," transferring responsibility to the United Nations, the statement said.

Mr. Clinton said the peaceful return to power of Mr. Aristide "capped a breathtaking month of democratic restoration and the beginnings of Haiti's economic recovery, all made possible by the dedicated efforts of our service men and women in Haiti."

"Our forces' accomplishments in the last month have been superb," Mr. Clinton said. "I am confident they will maintain its outstanding record and leave a Haiti poised to consolidate its hard-won democracy, create a brighter future for all its people and become a factor for stability in the region and hemisphere."

Mr. Han said.

The 77-year-old O is the highest-ranking veteran of the "first-generation" old-guard revolutionaries who allegedly fought Japanese colonial rule, alongside Kim Il-Sung and is known to be close to Kim Jong-Il.

Kim vows to give his all for N. Korea

TOKYO (AFP) — Kim Jong-Il, heir-apparent to late North Korean President Kim Il-Sung, has sent a message to the North Korean people, pledging to do his best for the Communist country, a report from Pyongyang said Saturday.

"I will as ever devote my all to the country and the people, bearing deep in mind our people's absolute trust in and expectation for our party," the junior Kim said Friday, according to the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) report monitored here.

Mr. Kim made the remarks in a message to the "entire people who deeply mourned the death" of his father, who died on July 8.

The junior Kim is widely expected to be named North Korea's top leader in the near future, but there has been no official announcement on his succession.

position. Kim Jong-Il is now called by KCNA "great leader of our party and our people," an accolade that had been used for his father by KCNA, and holds the titles of National Defence Commission chairman and supreme commander of the Korean People's Army.

He also took over the post of secretary of the ruling Workers' Party from his father after his death.

Meanwhile North Koreans, who accompanied Armed Forces Minister O Jin-U on his trip to Paris for medical treatment, have also asked French doctors to check the medical records of Kim Jong-Il, South Korean Foreign Minister Han Sung-joo was quoted as saying Saturday.

A six-member entourage that arrived in Paris Tuesday with Mr. O was carrying with it a number of medical tests

and X-rays of Mr. Kim Jong-Il, Mr. Han told South Korean journalists in Paris.

"I heard that the other purpose of their trip here is to bring in medical records and (X-ray) photos of Kim Jong-Il and have him indirectly checked up," Mr. Han was quoted as saying by a major newspaper, JoongAng Daily.

Mr. Han dismissed speculation that Mr. O's trip to Paris might have been the result of a power struggle.

"I think that the reason that O was sent to Paris, despite anticipated negative publicity, was that O is considered necessary to sustain the Kim Jong-Il regime."

Mr. Han said.

Bhutto offers friendship to opponents; Sharif rejects

ISLAMABAD (R) — Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto offered friendship Saturday to her political foes to avert two constitutional amendments but the offer was immediately rejected by opposition leader Nawaz Sharif.

Mr. Bhutto said the opposition should support constitutional amendments to restore special parliamentary seats for women, discontinued after a constitutional clause expired in 1990.

Another would empower the assembly speaker to have the custody of deputies during their arrest or trial.

"We extend a hand of friendship to you," Ms. Bhutto told the opposition parliamentary deputies as the National Assembly (lower house) launched an opposition-called session, amid uproar.

"You should also extend the hand of friendship to women who constitute 30 per cent of the population by restoring their reserved (parliamentary) seats."

But Mr. Sharif, the former prime minister who is campaigning against Ms. Bhutto since losing elections to her a year ago, said he had no confidence in the ruling Pakistan People's Party.

"Trusting them is like befotting yourself."

The session, called by the opposition to discuss the political situation and the arrest of some of its deputies during recent anti-Bhutto agitation, failed to take up its agenda because of a rumpus in the house when deputies from both sides exchanged abusive remarks.

A scuffle between a ruling party deputy and two opposition deputies was averted by

the intervention of other colleagues from both sides.

The opposition insisted the government should bring all the nine arrested deputies to the house. But Law Minister Iqbal Haider said the provincial government holding the deputies could release only those who were detained but not those being tried by courts. "Only courts are competent to release them."

He said one detainee was already attending the House while three others had been released on parole by provincial authorities and were on their way to Islamabad.

Mr. Bhutto, who along with her husband Asif Ali Zardari, had faced several criminal charges in courts in the past as opposition leader, said Mr. Zardari had been attending the assembly during his trial with the permission of the court.

Why are they shy in approaching the courts when we are also ready to help them there?" Ms. Bhutto asked.

Mr. Sharif said he had no faith in the courts, accusing the government of appointing its supporters as judges. The government denies the charge.

Ms. Bhutto said she faced similar problems during the detention of her husband. "We will have to amend the constitution to empower the speaker to have the custody of a member during his trial," she said.

"Let us sit down and cooperate on two amendments — for restoring the reserved seats of the women in the assembly and for empowering the speaker to have the custody of the arrested members."

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The hopes for Casablanca

THE CASABLANCA economic summit scheduled to begin today on economic development for the Middle East and North Africa aims first and foremost to give the recent successes in the peace process an economic context. Without regional economic development and the promotion of commercial and trade ties among the countries of the Middle East in particular and North Africa in general, the kind of peace that was painstakingly attained between Jordan and the Palestinians, on the one hand, and Israel, on the other, would continue to be devoid of flesh and meaning. We all know that the Arab countries in particular are afflicted by dire economic conditions comprising poverty and unemployment to such an extent that they threaten the structure of political and legal peace that has been achieved thus far. We also know that extremism flourishes on poverty and economic deprivation, including lack of social and economic justice. We also comprehend that extremism is on the rise in our midst due to widespread social and economic injustice within the Arab societies. That is why the Casablanca conference could not have been convened at a better or more opportune time. What remains to be done is the agreement on the basic goals and objectives of this international gathering. Should the promoters of the conference focus only on purely lucrative ventures, then we have every cause to be afraid that the objectives of the conference could end up exasperating the problem rather than solving it. The fact that the private sector will take an equal part in the deliberations suggests that indeed profit rather than public interest could be the driving force behind the effort. No one would wish to brush aside the element of material gain whenever there is a scheme for regional economic planning and development. Viable economic projects would of course entail an element of profit. Still we would like to see the promoters of the Casablanca conference direct their attention to ways and means to create employment opportunities for the labour forces in the region and alleviate their economic and social problems. That is why we would have preferred to see representatives of the labour force present at the Casablanca convention so that their cause would also be taken into consideration. The International Labour Office's (ILO) experience should therefore be put to good use in Morocco.

We certainly do not wish to see the rich becoming richer and the poor becoming poorer in the affected areas in the wake of the Casablanca gathering. Now therefore is the time to sound the alarm so that the declaration expected to be issued on Tuesday would be comforting to all peoples in the region.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A COLUMNIST in Al Rai Arabic daily Saturday pointed to two significant elements in U.S. President Bill Clinton's address to the Israeli Knesset and in his decision not to visit the old city of Jerusalem. The U.S. president reaffirmed to the Israeli lawmakers that Washington remains a staunch supporter of the Jewish state regardless of its policies and its occupation of Arab land. He also reported to the Knesset about his earlier visit to Jerusalem and how he had pledged never to abandon Israel should he ever become president of the United States, said Mahmoud Al Rimawi. But later Mr. Clinton chose not to visit the Old City as was planned by the Israeli officials, thus following in the footsteps of former U.S. presidents in this regard lest the visit be interpreted by the Israelis as an American support for Israel's annexation of the city, said the writer. President Clinton's decision to stay away from the Old City represented a significant sign to the Palestinians, added the writer. But he also said that his absolute support for the Jewish state is also considered seriously by the Arabs, whose lands are still under occupation.

AL DUSTOUR daily Saturday said that President Clinton's visit to Damascus reflected his administration's determination to bring about a comprehensive settlement on all tracks of the Arab-Israeli talks. Indeed, the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty has opened the door wide for Washington to make moves to establish peace on the other fronts, said the daily. Stressing that peace can be achieved only on the basis of U.N. resolutions, the paper said that it is hoped that Israel would give up its intransigent position and remove the last barriers that prevent the conclusion of a just peace with Syria. The paper noted that the 1991 Madrid conference was convened to implement the U.N. resolutions, which contain the basic elements for the attainment of a just and lasting settlement with the Arab World.

Sunday's Economic Pulse

By Dr. Fahd Al Fanek

Demographic issues the treaty leaves open

THE PEACE treaty that was signed between Jordan and Israel Wednesday did not resolve one of the major problems, namely the fate of displaced Palestinians (1967) and Palestinian refugees (1948).

Israel insisted that this problem is not a purely Jordanian-Israeli issue and that third parties should be involved, such as the Palestinian self authority, and may have something to do with other Arab countries if Israel has the intention to raise the rights of the Jews who left Arab countries and migrated to Israel, leaving their property and other assets behind. In this respect, one should stress the difference between Palestinians who were expelled by force and violence and obliged to flee, leaving all their belongings behind them, and the Jews of the Arab World who chose to migrate to Israel at a time and circumstances of their choice.

Deferring the issue of displaced Palestinians in Jordan is only one example of the results of lack of coordination between Jordan and the Palestinian authority. Had we reached a documented understanding on the status of Palestinians living in Jordan regarding their future, rights and duties, Israel would not be able to postpone the issue until after peace, especially when it comes to the right of return for those who left Palestine on June 5, 1967 and thereafter. We were under the impression that their right to return to the West Bank and Gaza should not cause any disagreement because it is confirmed by clear cut resolutions of the United Nations and the Security Council as well as by the international law.

In this respect, the treaty dealt with the issue of refugees and displaced Palestinians from a pure attempt to alleviate their human suffering, not their exercise of a national right. The treaty referred the issue of displaced Palestinians to a committee that includes Egypt and the Palestinians and referred the issue of Palestinian refugees to the multilateral group. Jordan was able to amend the text of the treaty to

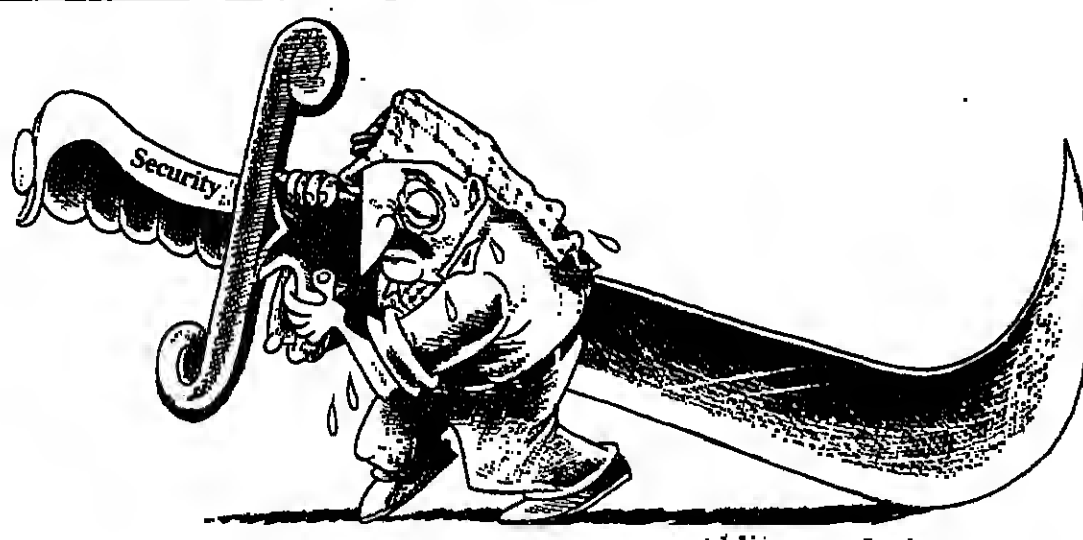
point out international law as a reference for resolving the two interrelated but not identical issues.

On the other hand, paragraph six of the general principles as stipulated in Article Two does not allow involuntary movements of persons, within the control of the two states in such a way as to adversely prejudice the security of their party. This is a simple statement but has extremely important consequences as we shall point out immediately.

The above principle forbids Israel from expelling or deporting Palestinians towards Jordan. This puts an end to the Likud project to transfer Palestinian population to Jordan as Ariel Sharon was advocating. This is of course a remote possibility but it was causing a lot of anxiety and nervousness in Jordan.

At the same time the agreed principle limits the ability of Jordan to oblige previously deported and or displaced Palestinians to return to Palestine against their will if and when their right of return is secured. Any return should be by choice only. Jordan does not find a difficulty in accepting this principle because it falls in line with the official position towards Palestinians in Jordan who will be given the choice of returning to the West Bank and Gaza or staying in the kingdom.

Israel is extremely sensitive to demographic issues and showed full interest in the subject all along. It conveniently emphasised one of the human rights, mainly not to deport an individual or to deprive him from his right of migration. It seems that Israel is placing its bets on the willingness of many Palestinians to leave the occupied territories voluntarily to other Arab countries, and on the unwillingness of most Palestinians living in camps in Jordan to return to Palestine. Israel is evoking this human right selectively because it wants to encourage Palestinians to leave and discourage their return.



U.S. presence in Gulf not universally popular

By Youssef Azmezh
Reuters

KUWAIT — Kuwaitis love President Bill Clinton who visited their small country on Friday to show U.S. support against Iraq, but fears exist that growing dependence on Washington may not be totally beneficial.

They may not love him as much as they did his predecessor George Bush, who came to their rescue after Iraq's 1990 invasion, but enough to gladden his heart and possibly help his popularity ratings at home.

The admiration by almost all Kuwaitis of U.S. presidents for their tough responses to Iraqi President Saddam Hussein is not necessarily shared by everyone around the region that sits on the world's richest oil reserves.

Gulf Arab governments, led by Saudi Arabia, regard their alliance with Washington as a strategic necessity.

They hope it will keep at bay what they see as potential predators among tens of millions of impoverished neighbours who envy them the wealth that metamorphosed their mainly nomad and impoverished com-

munities into ultra-modern, high-tech states in less than 50 years.

Business communities generally share the concerns of their governments and see the Washington link as healthy insurance.

But many senior officials and some businessmen express concern in private about what they see as the increasing dependence on the U.S. that is antagonising large sections of society brought up on a diet of anti-American rhetoric.

"Many ordinary people don't like it... It is feeding an Islamic backlash that could be dangerous in the long-term," one Gulf diplomat said.

He and others like him do not necessarily see another way out for their governments.

The six states of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) — Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates — are surrounded by potentially hostile 60 million Iranian and 20 million Iraqis to the east and north, and 13 million Yemenis in the south west.

They do not completely trust the 20 million levantine — Palestinians, Jorda-

nians, Syrians and Lebanese to the north and fear the rise of a hostile power across the Red Sea in Egypt.

Muslim militants in Egypt, which has a population of nearly 60 million, are waging a violent campaign against the country's pro-Western government.

Even in their own countries, they are often outnumbered by expatriate workers who have flocked to the Gulf in millions for a share of the oil bonanza that the sparsely populated states of the region were in no position to exploit on their own.

They have so far not been able to develop a joint regional military deterrent despite the billions of dollars they spent on arms purchases, mainly from the United States.

The sight of American troops in the land of Islam already angers purists who see it as a sign of weakness and corruption.

One Gulf diplomat said that resentment was fed by the fact that the Gulf states are having to pay the costs of U.S. and other allied deployment. Saudi Arabia and Kuwait between them paid some \$100 billion of

the allied costs of the 1991 Gulf war.

"We know they are here to protect their own interests and not for love of Gulf Arabs," he said.

When U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher came to Kuwait earlier this month to meet GCC foreign ministers, "hardcore sharing," as he called it, was at the top of his agenda.

He asked them, and the Gulf states agreed, to pay for the cost to the U.S. of sending its fleet, warships and thousands of soldiers to the Gulf in response to the massing of 80,000 Iraqi troops close to Kuwait's border. The bill for American troops alone is expected to run to some \$1 billion.

A Gulf diplomat who attended the talks reacted warily: "When the British colonised us, they used to pay us. Now the Americans are doing the same but they want us to pay for it."

He was referring to payments that Britain, which treated most Gulf states as protectorates until the early 1970s, used to make to unpeppery Gulf rulers before oil started to enrich them.

Fraud triggers alarm bells in S. Africa

By Rory Channing
Reuters

JOHANNESBURG — Some use computers, others condoms, but whatever the means, the quest for the illegal "fast buck" in South Africa has become feverish.

Fraud and economic crime, commentators say, have boomed in recent years marked by the longest recession on record and political uncertainty accompanying South Africa's transition to a post-apartheid democracy.

However, the battle against such offences will move up a gear soon when police, criminologists, lawyers, accountants and forensic experts, management consultants and corporate chiefs meet to review ways of curbing the menace.

"Fraud is said to be one of the fastest growing industries in South Africa," said a statement by conference organiser AIC, a division of Euromoney, which has arranged a two-day meeting starting Wednesday to examine the problem of

corporate fraud.

That will be followed by one on corruption on Friday, coinciding with these, another symposium will be held on commercial crime.

"Commercial crime and fraud are increasing at an alarming rate," declared a statement by the organisers of that forum, Conference Corporation.

Two recent incidents illustrate the wide-ranging nature of commercial crime.

Italian police on Tuesday arrested a British former corporate chairman in Florence, pending an extradition hearing, on eight charges of fraud involving 29 million rand (\$8 million) following the collapse of the industrial group he headed in South Africa.

An Israeli appeared in a Johannesburg court last Wednesday charged with unlawful possession of uncut diamonds, weighing 570 carats, which he had tried to smuggle into a Rome-bound flight in condoms inserted up his rectum.

Greed, political uncer-

tainty, frustration with foreign exchange controls, an erosion of values, and technological advances which increase opportunities for money laundering have contributed to the problem, analysts say.

Computer-related fraud is the type most feared by corporate management, police say.

Concern over the mounting fraud led to the formation in 1992 of a special office for serious economic crimes.

Advocate Dawie Fouche, assistant director for the office, said it was currently investigating 20 cases worth 1.15 billion rand (\$319 million), and three whose value had not been determined. They ranged from foreign exchange and trade and investment-related fraud to alleged police corruption.

He stressed, however, the office only took on cases which its limited staff of 17 lawyers and 13 police investigators could manage. Cases were accepted not necessarily because of sums involved, but also because

of their complexity, a need for urgency in solving them, or importance to the public interest.

The forensic and accounting arm of international accounting and management consultants KPMG, which runs a fraud barometer based on press reports, said the value of "major" cases — involving over 400,000 rand (\$11,000) each — more than doubled in 1993 to 1.3 billion (\$367 million).

In the first half of 1994, it monitored 29 such cases worth 372 million rand (\$103 million), in which management was responsible for 50 per cent, other employees 12 per cent and outsiders the rest.

Reporting on results of a survey of major corporations early in 1994, it said: "Ninety-seven per cent of respondents felt that fraud was a major problem facing business today, while 90 per cent felt the problem was getting worse."

The value of so-called routine fraud is reported to have jumped sevenfold.

Haiti choice for premier was in government before

By Andrew Downie
Reuters

PORT-AU-PRINCE — The last time Smerkel Michel worked in Haiti's government with his friend President Jean-Bertrand Aristide he quit after just a few months, apparently unhappy at Mr. Aristide's indecision.

Now, Mr. Michel, 57, has been chosen by Mr. Aristide again, this time as prime minister, a hot seat in a country with so many problems, giving power almost equal to that of the president. The nomination needs ratification by parliament.

A moderately wealthy man, Mr. Michel owns a food distribution outlet in Port-au-Prince, real estate and petrol stations, one of them on the capital's busiest road.

He is also the son of a Haitian army officer.

Yet his nomination was not greeted with pleasure by Haiti's small, wealthy elite, to whom his status as a businessman who had an officer father might give him entry. They see his friendship with Mr. Aristide as outweighing his business credentials.

Mr. Michel is best known for his short stint as commerce minister in 1991 during Mr. Aristide's first term as president.

Mr. Michel quit the post following disagreements over how to lower the price of basic foodstuffs.

The two men have remained close, however, since the 1991 coup that toppled Mr. Aristide although while the deposed President spent three years in exile in Caracas and Washington, Mr. Michel spent most of his time in Haiti tending to his business interests.

Mr. Michel, however, kept his distance from the

leaders of the military regime that ousted Mr. Aristide.

"After being a good friend of Aristide the business community will view him with suspicion," said one man who has known Mr. Michel since the late 1970s. "He is considered a moderate among the (Aristide) camp but many ask how moderate can they (Aristide allies) be."

The two men became friends in the mid-1980s when they both spoke out against the brutal regime of Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier, who fell from power in 1986.

In 1990 Mr. Michel served as treasurer for the popular Roman Catholic priest's campaign for president. During the two-month campaign, Mr. Aristide stayed at Mr. Michel's home in the wealthy suburb of Pétionville.

Mr. Michel's family came to know Mr. Aristide well. His brother, Philippe, was Mr. Aristide's bodyguard and his daughter was the president's close companion during his seven months in office.

Mr. Michel was born on March 29, 1937 in the western town of St Marc, the second of 12 children. As the son of an army captain, Mr. Michel moved frequently about Haiti and grew up in the towns of Les Cayes, Jeremie, Cap-Haitien and Port-au-Prince.

He left for the United States in 1956 at the age of 19 and studied business administration at the New York Business School, working his way through school.

He returned three years later to help his father's business and in 1965 branched out to open his own firm, selling food products. He has since broadened his business interests to include other companies.

LETTERS

Good times to come

To the Editor:

THE PROMISING events of last Wednesday adorned history with outstanding moments paving the way for resplendent times to come. The antagonism and hatred that have intensified throughout the 46 years of conflict have been dissolved in the signatures of enlightened statesmen. The treaty of peace between Jordan and Israel has been finally signed and shall be indelicated in the constitutions of the two states in a matter of days. Under the auspices of the United States of America, permanent peace has been sponsored and given new life in the Middle East.

Jordan has always been a country in striking contrast with its neighbours because of the scarcity of its natural resources. However, Jordanians have almost always consolidated and stood by the indispensable guidance of their beloved leader. It was thus that Jordan survived and even prospered. In the most delicate of economic situations and political predicaments imposed by our erratic region, the people have remarkably overcome impeding barriers through ingenious routes delineated by the King.

In order to ensure the continuity of that prosperity and provide much needed stability to the Middle East, King Hussein has decided, with the support of the majority, to make peace with Israel.

In the overwhelming atmosphere of peace and reconciliation, the representative body of the Palestinians, namely the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), has made peace with Israel; Sein Fein and the British government have succeeded in initiating promising negotiations; and finally blacks and whites in South Africa have worked hand in hand to form a new constitution free of segregation. In this long sought spirit, Jordan has made peace with Israel not in an attempt to emulate others, but rather as a prophylactic measure to spare the nation further wars, and open new doors for trade and mutually beneficial cooperation. Thus in effect, peace will elevate the living standards of the Jordanian people.

Now, there is talk of opposition in the local private newspapers. Here's my opinion: If, at the most crucial of times when our national unity is of insurmountable importance, we show opposition and scepticism to the course our country is taking, we will have proven that we are lacking in loyalty to the spirit of patriotism and we are not showing the appreciation we owe the King. He has led us through hardships. We could not have survived without the combination of his pragmatism, virtuosity and enduring political brilliance.

In addition, if it is said that making peace with Israel would be contradictory to the principles of Arabism, I would justifiably argue that the principles of Arabism are the ones Arabs themselves set by the nature of their actions, and since most Arab countries have shown willingness to make peace with Israel, the basis of that argument is obviously very shallow.

Finally one can only hope that the advantages of upholding peace in the region can somehow cause an alteration in the intransigent views of the opposers. For after years of strife, most Arab leaders have come to the progressive realisation that the only way in which light shall conquer darkness is by winning the battle for peace and allowing its success to prevail. It is for this reason that the treaty signed does not incur opprobrium, but rather pride, at the magnificence of the gift bestowed upon posterity.

Fawzi Tumeen,
Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

Bosnia from the Islamic perspective

FOLLOWING IS the full text of an address given by His Royal Highness Prince Ghazi Ben Mohammad, cultural secretary to His Majesty the King, at a symposium on "Europe's ethnic groups, minorities region," which opened Saturday in the Czech city of Brno. Prince Ghazi is representing His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan at the symposium.

IT IS an honour and a pleasure to be with you this morning and to address your conference on behalf of His Royal Highness Crown Prince El-Hassan. His Royal Highness extends to you his greetings and best wishes, and his deep regrets for not being able to join you personally. His Royal Highness is in Casablanca representing His Majesty King Hussein and Jordan at the Arab Economic Summit.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The issue I will address this morning is the tragedy of Bosnia; the tragedy of the Muslims as a religious group in Bosnia and the effects of this tragedy on the Islamic World and on Muslims the world over. We in Jordan feel that we have a particular right to speak on this issue, for two reasons:

First, we have a right to speak for Islam because as Jordanians and as Hashemites we represent traditional, moderate and — I dare say — "enlightened" Islam. That is, the spirit of the vast majority of Muslims throughout history and up to the present day. Muslims are, as the Holy Quran says (2:143), an "Ummatan Wasatan": a people of the "middle", of the centre, of the middle or of moderation, or a people of what is called, in Western terms, the "Aristotelean Mean." And we in Jordan are the middle of this "Umma" or "nation," geographically, ethnically, religiously, and politically. We bridge between the Maghreb and Indonesia; between "black Islam" and "yellow Islam"; between secular Islam and Islamic fundamentalism; between anti-Western sentiment and total capitulation to Western culture.

We in Jordan are, and have always been, friends and admirers of the West but do not believe that in every sphere of life "West is best." Our cultural policy — and by culture I mean the intellectual, moral and social content of a civilisation

tion; its forms, its habits; its customs; in short everything in the modern world that is not political, military, economic or legal — our cultural policy, I repeat, has always been to take the best from the Western world and to combine it with the best from our own civilisation and heritage as long as it does not contradict it. In short, we in Jordan represent both the quintessence of traditional Islam and the successful merger between Islam and the modern world, and this is to say nothing of our family's historical role as Hashemites.

Second, we feel we have a particular right to speak about Bosnia not because we have taken into Jordan this or that number of sick refugees according to our capacity, and not because we have sent this or that amount of humanitarian aid or money to Bosnia according to our capabilities, but because we know and we love Bosnia and the Bosnian people. Moreover, of all the world's nations, we have the second largest United Nations peacekeeping contingency force in the former Republic of Yugoslavia. Both His Majesty King Hussein and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan have visited the former Yugoslav Republics since the conflict began, and the Crown Prince has even been to Sarajevo under siege conditions, accompanied by the eldest son of His Majesty King Hussein, His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah. In his capacity as the Commander of the Jordanian Special Forces. Furthermore, I should also note that there has been a small Jordanian community in Bosnia and a small Bosnian community in Jordan since the turn of the century. All this is to say, then, that Jordan and Bosnia are integrally connected.

It is estimated that the total number of civilian dead in Bosnia (and this figure does not include the wounded or the maimed) has been at least 260,000, and 90 per cent of these have been Muslims. Moreover, the EC Commission of Inquiry headed by Dame Anne Warburton, in the spring of 1993, has estimated that at least 20,000 Bosnian women have been held and raped in Serbian rape camps, and this figure is, sadly, probably only around a third of the real

figure. Three quarters of the beautiful mosques of Bosnia have been destroyed and over one million Muslims have been driven out of their homes in Bosnia to become refugees scattered all over the world. Today the Bosnian Serbs, 32 per cent of the population of Bosnia before the war, are still refusing peace plans that would legally give them 49 per cent of the territory of Bosnia, and this is precisely because they control over 70 per cent of it and seem poised to conquer yet more this is winter. In short, the deliberate Bosnian Serb policy of ethnic cleansing has worked, and it will work still further. On the other hand, the Bosnian government, whose official policies have always been for pluralism, democracy, equality between ethnic groups and respect for human rights, is still unable to legally buy arms to defend itself and its people, and thereby divert an essentially military-civilian conflict into a military-military confrontation, because it is said that this would ignite the fighting yet further. Twenty-five United Nations resolutions, plentiful humanitarian aid and cosmetic NATO strikes have all admittedly been forthcoming, but the Islamic World has been prevented from sending any real military aid or assistance by the United Nations arms embargo on Bosnia.

These facts, ladies and gentlemen, are known to all of you and to recount them is the least and briefest possible thing I could say about Bosnia, and they convey nothing of the unspeakable horrors and unimaginable terrors and suffering that the Bosnian Muslims in particular have suffered. But these facts, ladies and gentlemen, are also not lost on the 1.1 billion Muslims of the world, one fifth of the world's population, and in his heart of hearts no Muslim believes that the Western world would have ever permitted Muslims to behave towards Christians as Christians have behaved towards them in Bosnia.

In order to understand how the Islamic World sees the tragedy of Bosnia it is first necessary to know a little about the historical background against which this tragedy has occurred. Therefore I trust you will permit me to digress slightly and depict this background as briefly as I can.

The fact is that ever since Napoleon landed in Egypt in 1798, the Islamic World has been in a state of upheaval like of which it had never seen before. What, had been, next to Christianity, the largest, most powerful, longest enduring and most glorious civilisation the world had ever known, suddenly became a second if not third rate power. Admittedly, Islam had been in political decline for a while before 1798 and the star of Europe had long since been rising, but it is nevertheless true to note that the Ottomans had been at the gates of Vienna as late as 1683, and had even taken the Ukraine 10 years prior to that. Suddenly, however, with the dawning of the 19th century the Islamic World found itself completely outstripped militarily, politically, technologically and scientifically. In earlier times when the Islamic World was in danger on the human plane by such threats as the Mongols, the Crusaders and Timurlane, the structure of Islamic society and culture, nevertheless, remained at root intact, and was eventually able to either absorb its conquerors and turn them into Muslims or to expel them. However, the new danger in the 19th century was not merely one that effected the lives of a certain proportion of the population, but one that effected the very fabric of the entire society. The very being of Islam was in danger in a way completely alien to its experience. For the 19th century brought with it not just European colonialism and imperialism, but an onslaught of brute machinery invented in the Industrial Revolution which instantly devastated the traditional artisanal guilds, agricultural practices and nomadic strategic depth of the Islamic World, and hence dealt an instant death blow to its traditional socio-economic structure.

Even more harmful, in the long term, was, incredibly, the secularist and relativist mental universe that came with the modern socio-economic structure. The Mongols, the Crusaders and the other opponents of the Arabs in history had shared the same basic view of the human condition that is presented by Islam: i.e. that man naturally is born, lives and dies in this world on a grand journey to an eternal and better world;

that man will have to account for his deeds; that good or bad are objective truths; that there is an absolute; that reality has a meaning, and, above all, that God exists and presides over the world He created. However, the secularism and relativism of the 19th century brought a radically different view of the nature of the human condition, a view that would eventually seek to corrode the traditional reference points of the world of faith, and replace it with thinly disguised atheism and nihilism. What particularly lent credence to its arguments were nothing other than the fruits of its thinking, that is, the empirical evidence of modern science and technology. Thus, philosophical theories and schools of thinking radically opposed to religion, from Freudianism to Darwinism, sprang up everywhere and were everywhere given a hearing in the name of science and "progress."

Of course, not many people in the Islamic World directly lost their Islamic faith because of the material advances of the secularist — relativist mentality, but nevertheless the overwhelming and ubiquitous products that were the fruits of this mentality soon forced the Islamic World to abandon the plane of the unseen as its primary concern and focus of energy and culture, and start reacting on the earthly level. Soon, the Islamic World became involved in a breathless material struggle with a Europe that was always one step ahead and that was anyway itself culturally spinning out of control.

Indeed, the world has seen more change in the last 200 years than in the last 6000 years of high civilisation before that, and the life of the average person has been altered beyond recognition through telephones and televisions; through flight and through the demographic explosion; through the fear of atomic/nuclear weapons and through computers. The modern world has thoroughly shaken the notion of high culture in Europe and has left the Islamic World in an even greater state of bewilderment.

Even when the Islamic World finally threw off the shackles of imperialism after World War II, it remained in a state of deep



Prince Ghazi Ben Mohammad

uncertainty characterised, on the one hand, by a defiant pride and, on the other hand, ironically, by a mad rush to take on Western technology, weapons and heavy industry. Towards the human and social aspects of Western world the Islamic World also remained and remains today in two minds. On the one hand, individual freedoms, political freedoms, personal rights and human rights in the West are admired by the people of the Islamic World and are deemed to be in accordance with the "true spirit of Islamic morality," and on the other hand, the breakdown of family and religious values in the West is strongly condemned and denounced. It is against this emotionally schizophrenic attitude towards Europe, ladies and gentlemen, that the tragedy of Bosnia falls. Half the Islamic World was looking to Western democracy to solve its ills and the other half was foreseeing after the breakdown of Communism and with the rise of Islamic fundamentalism, an inevitable clash between the two civilisations.

It will thus not surprise you, ladies and gentlemen, if I say that over and above profound sorrow and outrage felt by the Islamic World, the Muslim holocaust in Bosnia is likely to have far-reaching effects on the future of both Islamic and Western civilisations.

The genocide of one quarter of a million Muslims in the 1990s in Europe means, rightly or wrongly, to the

of Western institutions.

The problem is yet more complex than this however. It goes beyond mere sentiment. First, the situation in Bosnia has created tension and bad feeling in Muslim countries, particularly along the Mediterranean, where there had never been any social differentiation between the Muslim majority and the Christian minorities. The conflict has, sadly, heightened the sense of difference between and within these minorities. Second, the situation in Bosnia has created a certain amount of anti-Western feeling in Islamic countries and has thus helped to push the general population towards the slogans of the fundamentalist movements. Third, this increase of Islamic-Western polarisation has in turn scared parts of the pro-Western segment of the population and has caused them to start to immigrate to Europe in ever greater numbers. Fourth, these immigrants in turn have started to compete with native Europeans for jobs in business, and this has aided the rise of ultra-nationalist sentiment in Europe. In short, the tragedy of Bosnia has and will polarise the Mediterranean into two ever-more hostile camps. Admittedly, I have greatly simplified the matter but, nevertheless, the logic and truth of what I am saying is sound and easy to see. Injustice breeds hate; extremism breeds extremism; blood breeds blood; and Islamic and Western worlds are only pushed further along towards the imminent confrontation between them which many people have been talking about since the demise of Communism.

It is a dark picture that I have painted, but it is just simply the case that what has happened in Bosnia is an evil stain on the history of humanity, and no good will ever come of it. However, I come from a land where only three days ago one of the longest and bitterest conflicts in the modern world has moved definitively and irrevocably closer to being resolved forever. Jordan and Israel, as you all no doubt know, have finally signed the peace treaty that has alluded them for 50 years. And if Arab and Jew, formally bitterest of foes, can come together in peace, then so also can the foes in Bosnia lay down their arms. It is difficult, ladies and gentlemen, but it can be done. I leave it to you and to this symposium to tell us how.

Such perceptions have been, to those in the Islamic World looking to the West for moral leadership, a rude slap in the face, for them and for their arguments for mutual tolerance and friendship and for adopting Western-style democracy. Muslims all over the world are angry, hurt and disappointed, and they are rethinking their admiration

House begins debate on treaty today

(Continued on page 1)

some of whom were not Jordanian citizens, prevented the preacher appointed by the Ministry of Awqaf from addressing the worshippers. He said Sheikh Abu Zant then delivered the sermon and was attacked by civilians after he left the mosque. Sheikh Abu Zant was then taken to hospital by civil defence and was put under guard, Mr. Hammad said. "We do not approve any disturbances to security by any side... and we condemn any attack on any citizen," Mr. Hammad told lawmakers.

The House demanded that the government launch an official investigation into the incident "so that those found guilty be held responsible." A parliamentary committee including two IAF deputies was also formed to look into

the case. In their statement, deputies called for the protection of freedom of expression and the right of citizens to express their opinions.

Parliamentarians directly involved in drafting the statement said the wording was approved after consultation with the Islamist deputies, adding that the government was notified of the content. The majority of lawmakers, including several IAF deputies, endorsed the statement before Dr. Omoush objected to it, prompting a heated row at the end of the session.

The Islamists and other opponents of the peace process have accused the government of stifling their voices by denying them permission to hold anti-peace treaty rallies.

Dr. Akaleh said the "brutal attack on Sheikh Abu Zant is an attack on the House and the Jordanian people whom the House represents."

Dr. Akaleh condemned what he called the government's encroachment on public freedoms and attempts to oppress the opposition, which he stressed has been acting responsibly to protect the Kingdom's stability and security.

The attack on Sheikh Abu Zant, he said, "is considered a spark of strife started by the government that could have led to civil war had it not been for God's care."

"The declaration of a state of emergency and sending security forces to surround mosques are signs of a civil war that I fear we would not be able to contain (if it is to start)," said Dr. Akaleh.

Duties on cars may be cut

(Continued on page 1)

ican pressure, Jordan will have to bring down customs duties on cars as part of the terms of its entry to the General Agreements on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), which sets a 60 per cent ceiling on customs duties. Jordan cannot seek protective measures in this context since it does not manufacture automobiles.

It was not immediately clear whether the Ministry of Finance and Customs' study contained any measures to address complaints by those who bought cars in the last five years that they need compensation. There are voices already suggesting that one way of addressing their complaints is to offer the difference in customs duties

through exempting them from income tax to an equivalent amount.

"If the reduction in customs duties is not accompanied by a mechanism to compensate those who paid dearly for their cars, then the whole exercise will be unfair," said a car owner, the sentiments of many others facing the same dilemma.

Syria wants Israeli statement

(Continued on page 1)

economic conference opening Sunday in Casablanca, Morocco.

A foreign ministry spokesman confirmed that the Damascus visit was "possible" but had not yet been decided.

Mr. Kozyrev attended the signing of the Israel-Jordan

peace treaty on Wednesday on the countries' border but was forced to cancel planned visits to Israel, Syria and Lebanon because he had to return to Moscow vote against a parliamentary motion of no confidence against the government. The motion failed.

Russia was left largely on the sidelines of the Israel-Jordan peace initiative, brokered in part by Washington, but intends to play a major role in efforts to make peace between Israel and Syria — long one of Moscow's key allies in the region.

"President Assad could agree to Russian mediation," he added.

Clinton hails treaty

(Continued on page 1)

land-for-peace bargain with Israel.

In his radio address, Mr. Clinton said a "tremendous effort by the United States formed the keystone of the peace treaty signed by Jordan and Israel last week."

He said the troops he urgently dispatched to Kuwait earlier this month stopped an Iraqi army "dead in its tracks" and forced it to withdraw without a shot being fired.

Mr. Clinton said that in his travels he put the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) on notice it must "do everything it can" to end "terrorism" against Israel. And he said he told Syria it is time for it to join the peace process and come to terms with the Jewish state.

"We made progress on this trip, and we'll continue to do our part to bring peace to this long-troubled part of the world," Mr. Clinton said.

In a statement issued on board Air Force One, the White House said Mr. Clinton and King Fahd "voiced their view that any attempt to lift or alleviate the sanctions on Iraq will continue to be premature as long as Iraq does not comply fully and comprehensively" with all security council resolutions.

"Any other efforts inconsistent with the Security Council resolutions would only result in encouraging the Iraqi regime to continue its aggression policies to flout the will of the international community," Mr. Clinton and King Fahd said.

The statement confirmed that Saudi Arabia was firmly backing the U.S. position in its standoff against Iraq. Mr. Clinton met with the king in one-on-one and extended talks for about two hours in the town of Hafz Al Baten in northeastern Saudi Arabia on the last leg of his Mideast tour.

The United States and

Saudi Arabia also condemned "terrorism" and stated they were "united against all enemies of peace, those who threaten aggression and those who kill innocent people and whose real target is peace itself."

As Mr. Clinton arrived earlier, a Saudi government official said the kingdom wanted the peace treaty signed by Israel and Jordan to lead to comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

"Saudi Arabia hopes that the treaty... will be a new step toward a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East," said the spokesman quoted by the official Saudi Press Agency.

U.S. officials had said the president and King Fahd were to discuss the cost of the U.S. military buildup in the Gulf to deter the Iraqi troop movements.

Saudi Arabia paid about \$55 billion to cover part of the cost of the 1990-91 Gulf war over Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, which put a huge strain on its finance.

Before arriving in Saudi Arabia, Mr. Clinton said in Kuwait that Iraq would never again be allowed to threaten the emirate.

He returned to the theme of Middle East peace that brought him to the region on Wednesday, praising Kuwait for helping ease the Arab economic boycott of Israel.

Mr. Clinton went to Syria and Israel on Thursday and reported after talks in Damascus with President Hafez Al Assad that Syria was serious about peace and said he had made unspecified progress with Mr. Assad. Israeli officials and media were not convinced that Damascus was ready to drop its insistence on regaining all of the Golan Heights seized by Israel in 1967. Israel wants a Syrian commitment to full, normal relations before it will discuss a possible withdrawal.

Israel cautious on bank plan

(Continued on page 1)

but this unprecedented conference will allow us to set up necessary structures to do business," he said.

The finance minister said the benefits of the peace process were already felt in Israel.

"Foreign multinationals are less and less worried about the Arab boycott" on Israel, imposed by the Arab League in 1951, Mr. Shohat said.

American business banks like Lehman Brothers and German companies Volkswagen and Daimler Benz were now represented in the Jewish state, he said.

"Even Japanese companies have begun to invest in Israel, especially in magnesium exploitation in the Dead Sea," he added.

Gulf Arab states decided on Sept. 30 to lift the indirect economic boycott affecting

companies which deal with Israel, but the direct boycott remains in place.

The Middle East/North Africa Economic Summit, expected to draw more than 1,200 participants, is hailed as a first-of-its-kind meeting to consolidate peace in the region through economic cooperation and development.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres are to meet Sunday with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat to discuss ways of speeding up Palestinian autonomy. They are expected to put forth new proposals to ease the strife between the two sides.

The hurriedly scheduled meeting is to take place just before the opening Sunday evening of the three-day economic summit, to be presided over by Moroccan King Hassan II.

Settlers riot in Hebron

(Continued on page 1)

employment outside the built up areas of the West Bank to allow for the elections to hold before the end of the year.

Mr. Peres also criticised in a televised interview the maintaining of the closure of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, saying "it is impossible to continue it while hundreds of thousands of Palestinians depend on Israel for their living."

An Israeli television report said the closure might be lifted early next week, but a

military spokesman could not confirm it.

Palestinian Minister for International Cooperation Nabil Shaath on Friday explained that the self-rule authority's main problems were social and economic and that Israel's closure measure had made it worse.

"The problem for the Palestinians is not (Islamic) fundamentalism, it is not Hamas, it is the economic and social policy that has been imposed on us by the

Some 80 Israeli businessmen are expected at the conference, which will mark the first time Israeli and Arab officials and investors meet to formulate specific investment and cooperation projects.

Israel is proposing more than 100 joint projects worth about \$25 billion, about half of them for water systems, Israel Radio reported Saturday.

Officials from most Middle East countries are attending the summit, as well as high-level officials from Europe, the United States, Russia and Asia. Among them are His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev, Turkish Prime Minister Tansu Ciller, and representatives of leading banks and non-governmental financial institutions.

(international aid programme, and the closure measure," he said.

The Casablanca talks will also touch on the Jerusalem issue, after the PLO's protest that Israel, in its peace treaty with Jordan, recognised Amman's special role in running the Muslim holy sites in the city.

The PLO argued that this agreement violated the autonomy deal which postponed the talks on the future of Jerusalem until 1996.

Kuwaitis move faster than Saudis

(Continued on page 12)

peace process. Syria and Lebanon.

The Clinton-Fahd joint statement that was issued Friday overnight after the two men met in Hafz Al Baten, in northeastern Saudi Arabia, stopped short of mentioning the possibility of

Riyadh having normal relations with Israel.

It also condemned terrorism and stated they were "united against all enemies of peace, those who threaten aggression and those who kill innocent people and whose real target is peace itself."

Mr. Clinton had made condemnation of Hamas and other hardline groups opposed to the peace process a central theme of his tour.

Saudi Arabia, a country ruled in strict accordance with Islamic law, has not so far hosted any session of the Middle East multilateral peace negotiations.

Dollar expected to remain in line with the current trend for coming months

The following report, covering the period from Thursday, Oct. 20-1994 until Wednesday, Oct. 26-1994, was provided by Naser Nabulsi, private client group at Merrill Lynch — Dubai.

Currency outlook

Overview

Fundamental View: The dollar set a new record low against the yen and two-year record low against the Deutschmark in recent trading. We do not expect any sustained change from the current trend in coming months despite prospects for higher U.S. interest rates. Financial markets already anticipate a Fed rate hike of 0.5 per cent by mid-November, so it may take a more aggressive tightening to provide support for the dollar at this point. Markets are wary of further intervention by central banks but policymakers must be cautious about the potential for a failed round of intervention to undermine sentiment towards the dollar even more.

The central problem for the dollar is large U.S. trade deficits and capital outflows. Fed tightening should eventually keep more money at home and support the dollar, but we continue to expect the current trend to take the dollar to DM/USD 1.45 and JPY/USD 92 over the next six-to-twelve months.

Technical View: The U.S. dollar was on the defensive across the board last week as the greenback lost ground against five of the six major currencies that we most regularly monitor. Only the Australian dollar declined against its U.S. counterpart. The prior week's marginal breakdown from the July-October trading range seems to have taken its toll, and the U.S. dollar index finished the week ended Oct. 21 with a 1.3 per cent loss.

The index is now at its lowest weekly closing level since October 1992 and is testing 84.90-85.70 support. That band is important in the sense that, if penetrated, the way would be cleared for a move to below 83.00 and perhaps a full test to the 1982 low near 78.000. A momentum low has been in place for over two months and sentiment is viewed in a constructive light. This still allows for the idea that the recent price weakness has not been confirmed and is likely a late stage move in the underlying post-February downtrend. Even so that downtrend remains intact with medium term resistance at 88.00-88.40 and long term resistance at 90.30-90.80. Caution therefore, remains warranted.

Japanese yen

Fundamental View: The yen traded as high as JPY/USD 101 on a flurry of dollar optimism in early October. That followed a subdued resolution to U.S.-Japan trade talks which concluded on Sept. 30 and signs that U.S. inflation remained moderate. But ongoing concerns about the U.S.-Japan trade imbalance and worries about potential inflation quickly eroded all of the dollar's gains and sent it tumbling to a new postwar low on Tuesday at JPY/USD 98.37. Since then the dollar has recovered marginally and is currently trading near JPY/USD 97.0.

Evidence that the U.S.-Japan trade imbalance continues to run at an annual rate of nearly \$60 billion points to little respite for the dollar any time soon. Likewise, a sharp net outflow of long-term capital from Japan in recent months — \$140 billion at an annual rate — looks unsustainably high relative to Japan's current account surplus of about \$130 billion.

The Fed is expected to raise interest rates by another 50 basis points in mid-November and to continue to raise the funds rate to 6.25 per cent by mid-1995. While that eventually may provide support for the dollar, rising rates may initially discourage capital inflows into U.S. stock and bond markets by raising the risk of capital losses. We expect

the trend of higher U.S. rates and a weaker dollar to continue well into 1995, bringing the dollar to JPY/USD 92 yen over the next twelve months.

Technical View: The Japanese yen rallied 1.1 per cent versus the U.S. dollar during the week ended Oct. 21. For the second week in a row, the Consensus Inc. weekly sentiment reading came in at only 11 per cent bulls. This is a constructive (oversold) reading for the currency and implies that, even with weak momentum, nearby reactions will probably be short lived. Thus, despite the recent break below the 1994 trend line, the underlying uptrend remains in force. Medium term (first) resistance exists at 100.80 Y/U.S.\$, with longer term resistance coming in at 101.80. Important support exists at 98.60-97.60; a break of that level would allow for a move through 93.

Deutsche mark

Fundamental View: Recent dollar weakness against the Deutschmark has been attributed to a number of factors: Chancellor Kohl's victory in the German elections; capitulation by U.S. Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen on possible U.S. intervention; comments by European monetary officials indicating they are not planning to intervene; and the market's perennial concern that U.S. inflation is about to accelerate.

In New York on Tuesday, the dollar posted a new two-year low against the mark when it changed hands at a DM/U.S.\$ 1.4845. The dollar recovered somewhat overnight and is currently trading near DM/U.S.\$ 1.50. Further Fed tightening would help prop up the dollar, but the market already anticipates a move of 50 basis points in coming weeks so it may take more than that to support the dollar meaningfully. Concerted central bank intervention on behalf of the dollar could also provide a lift, but on June 24 the Fed and sixteen other central banks spent billions of dollars only to be foiled — the dollar ended the day weaker.

We maintain our forecast for the dollar to trend lower over the next six months to DM/U.S.\$ 1.45 before recovering to DM/U.S.\$ 1.50 in the six months after that. However, we caution that volatility will continue to plague the dollar for still some time to come.

Technical View: The Deutschmark rallied 1.4 per cent against the U.S. dollar last week, in the process, recorded its highest reading versus the dollar since October 1992. Unlike the yen, sentiment for the D-mark remains neutral to near overbought. Momentum has been deteriorating since August, and still seems to have the potential to remain under pressure for the rest of the year. This suggests that the recent strength (as well as the underlying uptrend that has been in force since February) is close to a top.

Nonetheless, it would likely take a decline back through at least 1.54 DM/U.S.\$, and more likely 1.80, to reverse that trend and substantiate the action of momentum. Strong resistance remains at 1.48.52; strength through that range would allow for at least a challenge of 1.39.

Against the yen, the D-mark rallied 0.3 per cent last week and, in the process made a new high for the year. Medium term oscillators are overbought and short term indicators have peaked. This implies that the current strength could be coming to an end; if so, renewed weakness is likely. The trading range generates support at 59.80, with resistance above 88.50.

Pound sterling

Fundamental View: The British pound continues to strengthen against the beleaguered dollar eaching a new two-year high of U.S.\$/GBP 1.84. The pound has gained over 5 per cent in about seven weeks, rising from U.S.\$ 1.5525 to U.S.\$ 1.8405. The pound also gained ground against the DM rising to DM/GBP 2.44. The pound seems to have broken at -

temporarily - from the pattern of moving in tandem with the U.S.\$ by gaining ground against both the U.S.\$ and the DM even as the dollar weakens against the DM. The pound received support from renewed speculation of another increase in interest rates by the year end, following a stronger than expected CBI industrial survey.

In general, the pound is drawing strength from sound economic fundamentals: Inflation running below 3 per cent is at a 27 year low, growth is robust, while the current account deficit is projected to decrease.

We have a positive outlook on the pound and expect it to continue to appreciate against the Deutschmark and the U.S. dollar as both the nominal and real interest rate differentials move in favour of the pound. Our twelve month forecast is for a stronger pound at U.S.\$/GBP 1.83 and DM/GBP 2.45.

Technical View: The British pound gained 2.0 per cent versus the U.S. dollar during the week ended Oct. 21, and was the strongest of the six currencies that we most regularly monitor. The Consensus Inc. weekly sentiment readings continue to be overbought with four consecutive readings in excess of 70 per cent bulls. Nonetheless, the currency has followed up its recent breakout with still higher rally highs and stands at its highest level against the U.S. dollar in two years. Momentum remains under pressure, having made its most recent peak back in July.

Recent strength, therefore, has not been confirmed and any further strength may not be sustainable. In that regard, a break back below 1.57 U.S.\$/£ would indicate that the rally trend is complete and allow for further weakness toward \$1.55. The trading range support remains at \$1.46. Resistance exists at \$1.843.

Against the DM, sterling gained 0.8 per cent last week and remains in its multi-month downtrend. Momentum has bottomed and seems to be gathering steam to the upside. Resistance is at 2.487-2.475, with support at 2.38-2.41.

Swiss franc

Fundamental View: Amid further dollar weakness, the Swiss franc was able to retain most of its recent gains against the dollar, but was weaker against the mark. During the middle weeks of October, the franc appreciated to S.F./U.S.\$ 1.24 from 1.29 and is currently trading near S.F./U.S.\$ 1.25. Against the mark, the franc steadily gave ground in the last week, failing to S.F./DM 0.84 from 0.83. The Swiss franc has been benefiting from its role as a refuge in times of uncertainty and from strong economic fundamentals.

In line with our six-month forecast, we expect further franc appreciation to S.F./U.S.\$ 1.22. After that, we expect to see the franc — like the mark — depreciate falling back to S.F./U.S.\$ 1.26 in 12-months time.

Against the mark, we maintain our forecast that the franc should be little changed over the next year, continuing to trade near S.F./DM 0.84. However, as the Swiss 10-year yield differential versus Germany narrows over the next year, the risk is for the franc to trade lower against mark.

Technical View: The Swiss franc advanced 1.3 per cent versus the greenback during the week ended Oct. 21. The currency is now testing its long-standing benchmark resistance at 1.23-1.28 S.F./U.S.\$, Sentiment is near overbought.

While the basic uptrend from the beginning of the year remains intact, momentum has been deteriorating since August. Support exists at 1.298, then 1.347. The DM cross was unchanged last week and remains near its recent multi-year low. Medium term momentum is attempting to improve, so the prospects for further strength appear to be reasonably good. Support exists at .827 and .813; resistance exists at .837 then above .850.

Canadian dollar

Fundamental View: U.S. dollar weakness helped the Canadian dollar to strengthen to just under C\$/U.S.\$1.35 from 1.38 a couple of days ago. We maintain our forecast for the C\$ to appreciate to C\$/U.S.\$ 1.28 in twelve months time due to positive economic fundamentals and interest rate differentials that favour the C\$. The Canadian-U.S. 10-year nominal government yield spread is currently around 130 basis points. However, the real interest rate spread — nominal rates adjusted for consumer inflation growth — is over 400 basis points. A premium of that magnitude should induce further capital inflows into Canadian markets.

Furthermore, the Canadian economy is expected to be even stronger next year than previously thought. We have revised higher our 1995 real GDP forecast to 3.8 per cent from 3.3 per cent based on continued strong export demand from the U.S. and a pickup in domestic demand. Strong economic growth will continue to boost tax revenues, further improving the federal government's budget deficit. Large

budget deficits continue to be a major concern for investors in the Canadian markets. Canadian Finance Minister Paul Martin recently said that his government was determined to slow the rise in government debt (currently around 95 per cent of GDP) within three years. That would be a major plus for Canadian markets.

Technical View: The Canadian dollar gained 0.2 per cent against the U.S. dollar last week. Sentiment readings are at their most overbought level since late 1991. Momentum remains overbought, but as confirmed the recently rally highs. This, along with the recent penetration of the 1991-1994 downtrend, suggests still higher highs even if an intervening correction does develop. A move through 1.34 C\$/U.S.\$ would allow for \$1.31. The April-August trading range should provide important and ample support at 1.37-1.40.

Australian dollar

Fundamental View: The Australian dollar ended the week around U.S.\$/A\$ 0.735. The Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) raised official cash rates by 100 basis points on Monday. The move was seen as a preemptive strike against inflation. An increase in short-term rates was expected following comments by the RBA Governor Fraser that a rate hike was not too far away. The market was however a little surprised both by the timing and the size of the rate increase. The rate hike helped A\$ firm. Commodity prices, both rural (wool, sugar) and non-rural (gold and base metals), have been rising and the prospects are for higher prices. Commodity prices continue to be the most significant positive for the A\$ going forward.

The widening current account deficit continues to be the most important risk factor for the A\$. The current account deficit widened in August to A\$2.1 billion from A\$1.8 billion in July. We expect the current account deficit in 1994 to be around A\$2.2 billion, a little more pessimistic than the government's forecast of A\$18.0 billion. Our twelve-month forecast is for the A\$ to appreciate to U.S.\$/A\$0.78.

Technical View: The Australian dollar fell 0.7 per cent against the U.S. dollar during the week ended Oct. 21, and was the only one of the six currencies to lose ground against the greenback for the week. Sentiment remains at overbought levels. Medium term momentum has a downward bias, and this weakness is occurring along with a significant negative divergence.

The uptrend in price from the October 1993 low is still intact, but with the fragile momentum, further weakness still appears needed to correct the excess that built up during the rally from last October's low. A break of 0.73 U.S.\$/A\$ would allow for a test of \$0.7225. Similarly, a break below that latter, second support, level would likely signal further weakness towards \$0.70 indicated resistance remains at \$0.75 and higher.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SUNDAY OCTOBER 30, 1994

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Forget the old and the frustrating and focus your attention on investigating all sorts of new interests and activities which will increase your worldly understanding. Be more aware of opportunities.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You have an opportunity now to decide about public affairs, but talk them over with twigs and get their suggestions. Be clever about new ideas.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Combine your finest tenets with practical activities and you can win out in the future. Take it easy tonight with your loved ones.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) This is an ideal day to know what your mate expects of you and to try to please him/her to the best of your ability. Be happy tonight.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Gain the cooperation of a fellow associate and stop being so sensitive and emotional. Make the evening a happy one for your loved ones.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Once you have attended services of your choice, plan how to make the new week more profitable at your regular assignments and you will be successful.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Get into some kind of amusement with congenial friends which will be enjoyable. Come to a better understanding with your loved one.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Talk over with your family what is expected of you and then meet only reasonable demands, which are practical. Entertain guests well tonight.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You can easily find the right solution to problematical affairs which have been vexing for some time. Don't be afraid to ask direct questions.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Concentrate on property and financial matters quietly and you can see how to improve them for the benefit of those close to you.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Sit quietly for a while and plan just how you want things to be around you. Be happy in the evening with your mate and good friends.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Meditate on whatever you want to be in your life and go after them. Go somewhere with your mate, but don't over-spend on things.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You will have every chance to look into the right outlets through which you can prosper in the future. Join a social group to have fun.

Birthstone of October: Opal Tourmaline

Cyprus said to be safest with best touristic services

THE TOURIST guide for Arab travellers has chosen Cyprus as the "world's safest country with best touristic services" for the year 1993-94.

Publisher of this tourist guide, Edward Daniel presented the golden "Plate of Honour" to the Cypriot Interior Minister Dinos Michaelides. The minister received the plate and

praised Mr. Daniel for his efforts in promoting Cyprus in the Arab World through the mass media. He wished him every success in the endeavours as publisher of the "Tourist Guide."

The CTO Director-General Phiney Michael said in her speech: "This valuable gesture is rightly justified by the continuous-

ly increasing number of our tourist guests, notable from Europe and the Arab states, who now count around two million persons a year, and also by high quality services provided by luxury hotels, apartments villas and restaurants under the supervision of our organisation. Cyprus has become internationally famous for its beautiful

beaches, landscape and mountains, the friendliness and the hospitality of her people as well as her direct and easy communications with all countries of the world."

The official spokesman of Cyprus Airways, Tassos Angelis commented: "Even our national airline had no incident in its fleet up till now, thank God."

Peanuts



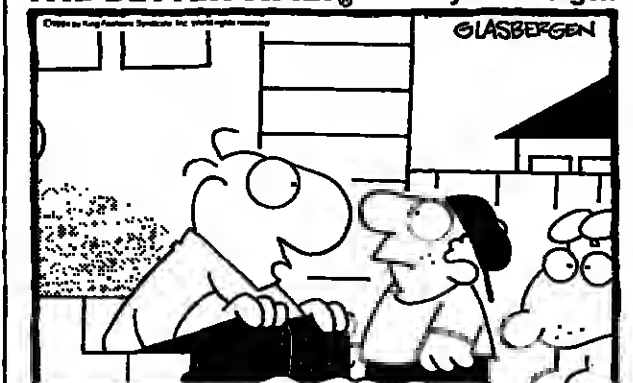
Andy Capp



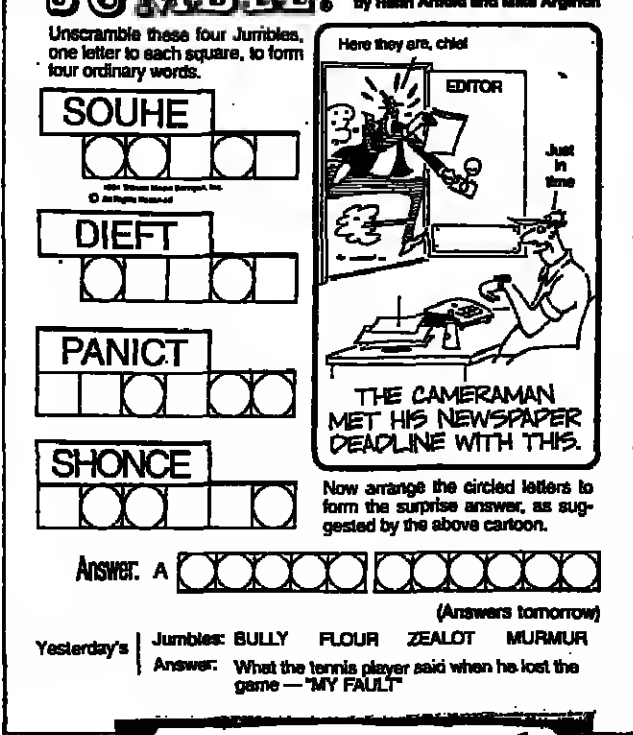
Mutt'n'Jeff



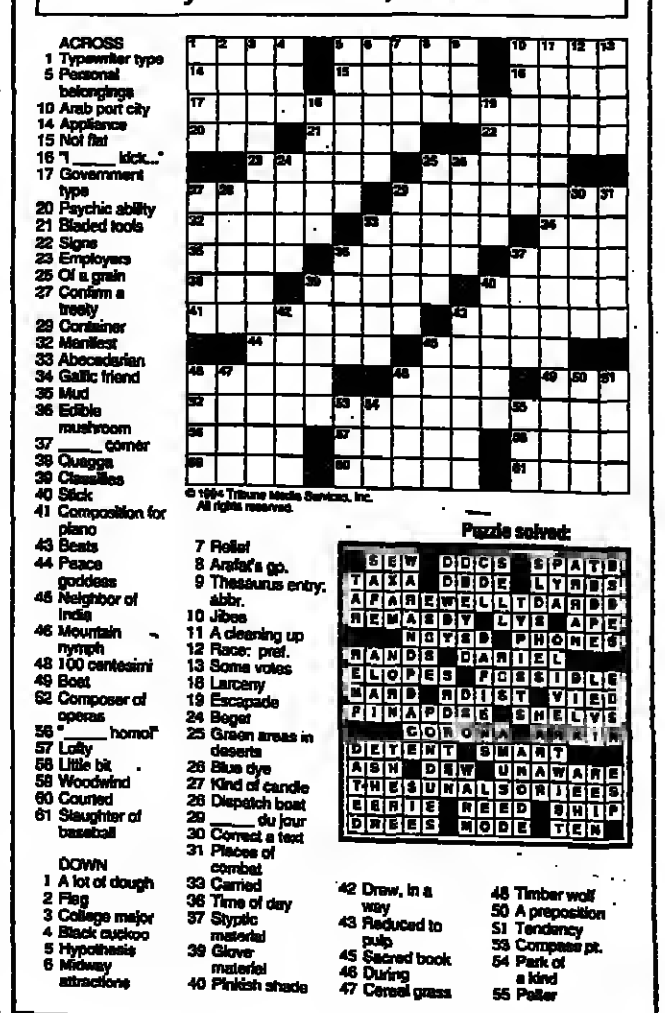
THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen



JUMBLE THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME



THE Daily Crossword by James Berrick



هذا من الأصل

Financial Markets

Jordan Times
In co-operation with
Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Close 27/10/94	New York Close 28/10/94
Sterling Pound	1.6360	1.6240
Deutsche Mark	1.4888	1.5100
Swiss Franc	1.2542	1.2595
French Franc	5.1325	5.1665
Japanese Yen	97.00	97.25
European Currency Unit	1.2754**	1.2613

100 for STD
* European Opening at 8:00 a.m. GMT
** Interbank Interest Rates

Date: 28/10/1994

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	4.75	5.37	5.68	6.06
Sterling Pound	5.37	5.75	6.25	6.93
Deutsche Mark	4.68	4.93	5.06	5.50
Swiss Franc	3.43	3.75	4.00	4.43
French Franc	5.25	5.45	5.62	6.06
Japanese Yen	2.12	2.18	2.25	2.62
European Currency Unit	5.56	5.88	6.06	6.68

100 for STD
* European Opening at 8:00 a.m. GMT
** Interbank Interest Rates

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Date: 29/10/1994

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.6900	0.6920
Sterling Pound	1.1190	1.1240
Deutsche Mark	0.4559	0.4582
Swiss Franc	0.5469	0.5490
French Franc	0.1333	0.1340
Japanese Yen	0.7088	0.7123
Dutch Guilder	0.4068	0.4088
Swedish Krona	0.0447	0.0449
Italian Lira	0.0447	0.0449
Belgian Franc	0.0447	0.0449

Date: 29/10/1994

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.8140	1.8300
Lebanese Lira	0.040835	0.042425
Saudi Riyal	0.1830	0.1850
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.3190	2.3730
Qatari Riyal	0.1883	0.1910
Egyptian Pound	0.2000	0.2200
Omani Riyal	1.7600	1.8010
UAE Dirham	0.1873	0.1890
Greek Drachma	0.2725	0.3150
Cypriot Pound	1.3925	1.4995

Asian airlines to check protectionism

SINGAPORE (AFP) — The Orient Airlines Association (OAA), a grouping of Asia Pacific's top 15 carriers, has announced that it had set up a panel to check Western protectionism and escalating airport charges.

The question of level playing fields is a subject that will be discussed by DAA's new "aero-political" committee. OAA Chairman Cheong Chong Kong told reporters after the grouping's one-day conference of senior executives here.

Mr. Cheong said in his opening remarks at the conference that the OAA was concerned over the possibility of the European Union turning into a protectionist bloc.

Japan Airlines senior vice-president Shinzo Suto said at the news conference that the OAA was already seeking "equal" bilateral air agreements between member carriers and those outside the grouping. Especially the United States.

OAA members comprise Air New Zealand, Air Niugini, All Nippon Airways, Cathay Pacific, China Airlines, EVA Air, Garuda, Japan Airlines, Korean Air, Malaysia Airlines, Philippines Airlines, Qantas, Royal Brunei, Singapore Airlines and Thai International.

The Manila-based OAA, set up in 1966, is a non-profit body which acts as a forum for discussing issues affecting the industry and promoting cooperation among member airlines.

Mr. Cheong said that many costs faced by OAA airlines were beyond their control because they were imposed by governments, airport authorities and other regulatory bodies. "quite often without consultation or justification."

Nomura: Asian stock market stampede may leave Japan behind

TOKYO (AFP) — Asian stock markets are forecast to grow more than three times as fast as markets in Europe, the United States and Japan between 1993 and 2000, a Nomura Research Institute executive has said.

Toyomitsu Tamao, managing director of the Asian division at the affiliate of Nomura Securities Co. Ltd., said the institute's research showed that Asia's stock market value would grow 20.4 per cent a year in the eight-year period compared with between five per cent and six per cent for the other markets.

But he also warned that the Japanese stock market risked being "left behind" in the Asian rush, calling for "serious soul searching" if the country wanted to take part in the region's rapid development.

"In the year 2000, Asia excluding Japan will account for 16 per cent of the total market value of the world's stock markets," Mr. Tamao told the annual meeting of the International Organisation of Securities Commissions.

The shares of Hong Kong, Malaysia and Singapore in Asia are expected to decrease somewhat but the total market value of China is expected to expand at an annual rate of 40 per cent, the Nomura executive said.

"Rapid growth is also expected in Thailand and Indonesia."

Mr. Tamao estimated that China's share of the market value of all Asian stock markets would surge from three per cent in 1992 to 14 per cent by 2000. Thailand's share is forecast to rise from nine per cent to 10 per cent while Indonesia's share is projected to double from two per cent to four per cent.

"The major factors in the expected further growth of the economies and stock mar-

kets in Asia are a further shift towards market economies, further acceleration of privatisation and an unprecedented enhancement of equity investment by investors in Europe, the United States and Japan," he said.

"The impact of overseas equity investment by U.S. pension funds, in particular, will be substantial," he predicted.

"Stock markets in Asia, with its great growth potential, will continue to be objects of diversification of international portfolio investment."

Mr. Tamao was less upbeat about the prospects for the Japanese market, which is "not functioning as a place of capital procurement" as witnessed by recent declines in the number of foreign companies listed on the foreign section of the Tokyo Stock Exchange.

"The contraction of the foreign section is a serious problem if Japan aims to become like London, where shares from around the world are traded by the world's investors," he said.

But the failure of Japan to act as a place for foreign companies to raise funds is "more serious" than failing to function as a secondary market, especially given the country's huge external surpluses.

"What is presently taking place in Japan could be interpreted to demonstrate that the Japanese markets as a whole are being left behind in the wave of reform in the world's financial and securities markets," Mr. Tamao said.

"What I have mentioned is part of this trend. In this sense, Japan, with its huge current account surplus, must engage in serious soul searching to support the development of the Asia-Pacific region, which is the largest growth centre of the world," he said.

Rents in Chinese, Vietnamese capitals are among highest in Asia

TAIPEI (AFP) — Tokyo and Hong Kong have retained their titles as the two most expensive cities for office rents in Asia, but prime sites in major Chinese and Vietnamese cities have begun to challenge the leaders, a report by an international consultancy has said.

Office rents in Taipei in the first half of this year were rated as the eighth most expensive in Asia, the London-based Richard Ellis International Property Consultants said.

In a survey of 10 major cities in Asia, Ellis said average monthly rents of first-class office premises in Tokyo and Hong Kong were still the most expensive in Asia and the world.

Leased office space in Tokyo came up to \$524 per month per ping (a Taiwanese area measurement equivalent to 3.4 square metres), while those in Hong Kong stood at \$455, the agency said.

But those in three major cities of China — Shanghai, Beijing and Guangzhou — were not far behind.

Office rents in Shanghai were rated as the third most expensive in Asia at \$256, while the \$231 rental average in Beijing made the Chinese capital the fourth most expensive.

Close behind were two cities in Vietnam — Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City — at \$223.4 and \$193.4, respectively. They were followed by Guangzhou (\$190.3), Taipei (\$155), Singapore (\$152.6) and Bangkok (\$72).

China and Vietnam, which have introduced market forces into formerly state-planned economies, have seen faster economic growth and more foreign investment in the past several years.

Those policies have forced up office rents, as more overseas investors set up shop, the agency said.

Deutsche Bank to concentrate investment banking in U.K.

FRANKFURT (R) — Deutsche Bank A.G., Germany's largest bank, said Friday it plans to concentrate all its investment banking business in London.

Under the plan Deutsche would integrate its own investment banking business with the activities of its London-based U.K. investment banking subsidiary, Morgan Grenfell.

The Deutsche Bank Group's investment banking would be centred in London under a single management structure.

Deutsche Bank's chief executive Hilmar Kopper made clear that the move to London reflected the British capital's dominance in international financial products.

"A truly European bank must have an integrated pan-European management operating from its largest market — that is London for international products," Mr. Kopper was quoted as saying.

However, he stressed Deutsche Bank would not be abandoning the German financial capital as far as its investment banking was concerned. "Our German customers will be serviced — as in the past — out of Germany. We will continue to support Finanzplatz Frankfurt and to expand our Frankfurt-based resources," Mr. Kopper said.

Deutsche Bank is already a major player in the investment banking business which involves the issuing of shares and bonds as well as activities in corporate mergers and acquisitions.

Morgan Grenfell's chief executive Michael Dobson said in a statement, "the potential for bringing together the strengths of Deutsche Bank and Morgan Grenfell is enormous."

It was not clear from the statement how large the merged investment banking business would be, or if, or how many, Deutsche staff now based in Frankfurt would move to London.

There had long been speculation that Deutsche Bank was planning to concentrate its investment banking activities in London. Newspaper reports had speculated that the move might be seen as a blow to the independence of Morgan Grenfell, which Deutsche Bank took over fully in 1989.

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Sharp profit soars 54%

TOKYO (AFP) — Japanese electronics giant Sharp Corp. has said its pre-tax profit jumped 54.6 per cent from a year earlier to 31.2 billion yen (\$312 million) in the six months to September. The Osaka-based company said sales grew seven per cent to 615 billion yen in the same period, boosted by strong sales in electronic devices such as liquid crystal display (LCD) panels for which it is the world's largest producer. Sharp forecast full-year earnings of 64 billion yen on sales of 1.240 billion yen for the year to March.

Wihdat still in lead after tie with Ahli

JORDAN SOCCER LEAGUE

By Aileen Bannayan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Al Wihdat's lead atop the first division soccer championship was narrowed down to a one-point lead this week after their goalless draw with Al Ahli who somewhat delighted their fans after moving up to 7th place following a series of disappointing results.

Results in the 9th week of action brought about considerable changes in the standings with two more weeks to go before the first leg of the competition is concluded Nov. 11.

Titleholders Al Faisali moved up to third place after their 3-0 win over lowly Al Jeel. They are now tied with Al Ramtha and Al Jazireh with 13 points but lead on goal difference. Meanwhile, last-placed Al Karmel finally advanced to 11th place after managing draw against Shabab Al Hussein.

Al Jazireh, a team often threatened by relegation in earlier seasons, scored their fifth consecutive win, defeating Kufroum 1-0 to remain in fifth place.

On the other hand, Al Hussein further improved their scoring record after their 4-0 win over Al Arabi. They are the top scoring team with 29 goals, followed by Al Faisali with only 19. Al Wihdat remained the only unbeaten team so far,

although they have a low scoring record at 11-2.

Although they scored a 2-0 win over Al Qadissieh, Al Ramtha dropped to fourth place on goal difference. They will next have a crucial match against Al Wihdat in the most important match of the upcoming 10th week.

In the match attended by 18,000 fans at Amman stadium, Al Ahli and Al Wihdat settled for a goalless draw though the latter had more scoring chances which were blocked by one of the Kingdom's top goalies — Ahmad Abu Daoud.

Al Ahli had a well-knit defence that frustrated Al Wihdat's Mohammad Al Shamali and the Abdul Mun'em brothers. Al Ahli best chances were lost by Amer Wali and Husam Hammash.

In the second half, Al Ahli seemed content with ending the match in a draw and had a hard time blocking one shot after another.

Though Al Jazireh delighted their fans after their 1-0 win over newcomers Kufroum, the game was marred by the unsportsmanlike behaviour of opposing fans who attacked Al Jazireh's supporters with rocks after the end of match and at least five fans

were taken to hospital with cuts and bruises.

The sole goal of the match was scored by Al Jazireh's Simon George in the 59th minute to maintain his team's advanced position before they clash with 2nd-placed Al Hussein next week.

In another match, Al Karmel earned their second point in the standings after a 1-1 tie with 10th-placed Shabab Al Hussein.

Maher Sarsour gave Shabab Al Hussein the lead in the 23rd when he received a pass from Hammoudeh Abourah after both players earlier lost many scoring chances.

Al Karmel, who have the worst scoring record at 4-22, had a change of tactics in the second half and succeeded in scoring their precious equaliser in the final minutes by striker Marwan Suleiman.

In the match which witnessed the most goals, Al Hussein crushed Al Arabi 4-0 and remained one point behind leaders Al Wihdat.

However Al Hussein took control of the match after

header in the 25th minute.

Tadros, who has received an offer to play for one of Lebanon's top teams next season, assisted Mousa Awad in scoring the second goal in the 42nd minute.

Awad, Subhi Saleman and Jamal Abu Abed did not give Al Jeel's inexperienced players a chance and Tadros scored the third goal in the final minute.

At Al Hassan Stadium in Irbid, Mouaffaq Abu Hdeib opened scoring for Al Ramtha in the 21st minute.

Mustafa Adam repeatedly tried to equalise for Al Qadissieh, but his efforts were blocked by the goalie and the goalkeeper.

Al Ramtha secured their win when Abu Hdeib received a clear pass from Badran Al Shaqran and added the second goal to add two points to his team's record before they face leaders Al Wihdat next week.

Standings after 9th week

Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts.
Wihdat	9	7	2	—	11	2	16
Hussein	9	7	1	1	29	16	15
Faisali	9	5	3	1	19	6	13
Ramtha	9	5	3	1	17	6	13
Jazireh	9	6	1	2	15	7	13
Kufroum	9	4	1	4	17	18	9
Ahli	9	3	3	3	11	15	9
Arabi	9	3	2	4	12	17	8
Qadissieh	9	1	3	5	10	17	5
Shabab Al Hussein	9	1	2	6	13	23	4
Karmel	9	—	2	7	4	22	1
Jeel	9	—	1	8	4	22	1

Manchester hand Newcastle their first league defeat

LONDON (AFP) — Reigning champions Manchester United go their revenge Saturday as they handed Premier League leaders Newcastle their first league defeat of the season.

Alex Ferguson's high-class side, beaten in the League Cup in midweek by The Magpies, this time fielded their first-choice eleven at Old Trafford and took the points by triumphing 2-0.

That left Newcastle, on 29 points, just four ahead of the third-place Manchester men, with Blackburn Rovers, inspired by a Chris Sutton double, moving to within five points after beating second-placed Nottingham Forest 2-0 away.

But the biggest smile of the day came at White Hart Lane, where Ossie Ardiles, threatened by the axe, got a stay of execution after a miserable week as Tottenham Hotspur crushed West Ham 3-1.

Manchester United had fielded seven teenagers to give their established stars a rest in the earlier cup match against Kevin Keegan's men but their international line-up Saturday promised pure quality.

That quality paid off after 11 minutes when England defender Gary Pallister headed

home Ryan Giggs' free-kick to give United a 1-0 half-time lead.

The home side, relying on lightning breaks, could have sewn up the points by then but Czech goalkeeper Pavel Srnec produced three fine first-half saves to deny Eric Cantona, Mark Hughes and Andrei Kanchelskis.

Newcastle, unbeaten in their last 17 outings but without the injured 14-goal Andy Cole, began the second period brightly with Scott Sellars, seven yards out, skewing his left-foot volley past the post.

But the Reds continued to carve out the real chances, Hughes heading in a Giggs corner only for the effort to be ruled out by the linesman and Paul Ince then rattling the bar with a 25-yard effort.

Northern Ireland international Keith Gillespie wrapped up the game with a right-foot shot after cutting in from the left.

Blackburn's win against previously unbeaten Forest was built on Sutton's 13th and 14th goals of the season.

His first-half strike was a classic, shimmying and dummifying his way into space before curling a long-range effort into the top right-hand corner.

Sutton sealed the result with his second, a simple finish against the run of play. But the joy of victory was marred when Blackburn had Jason Wilcox sent off in the closing stages for two bookings.

Ardiles' saviours — for the moment at least — were German striker Jurgen Klinsmann and substitute Teddy Sheringham.

Klinsmann put Spurs' poor form and shock midweek cup defeat against Notts County behind him to score his 12th goal of the season after 19 minutes following a neat passing move.

Matthew Rush levelled three minutes before the interval but Klinsmann popped up to set up Sheringham in the second half and Nick Barmby, put away by Sheringham, ensured the points with the third after escaping the offside trap.

Meanwhile England international John Barnes produced a moment of magic to set Liverpool on their way to a 3-1 victory at Ipswich.

His first-half strike was a classic, shimmying and dummifying his way into space before curling a long-range effort into the top right-hand corner.

England football boss faces fraud inquiry

LONDON (AFP) — The Serious Fraud Office (SFO) is considering a criminal investigation into the business affairs of England football manager Terry Venables, according to Saturday's Independent newspaper.

The newspaper said that documents relating to Venables' controversial business dealings have been passed to the SFO following four separate inquiries by inspectors from the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI).

Apart from possible criminal proceedings, Venables could also face disqualification as a company director. The latest development comes as Venables is braced for an investigation by the BBC's "Panorama" television programme on Monday, which is understood to be making further allegations.

It is believed no decision has been made by the SFO on whether to launch a formal inquiry — it was given the latest evidence in the past few weeks — but it was confirmed Friday that officials are studying a thick dossier on the activities of Venables' collapsed company Edenote, which was the vehicle for his involvement in the 1991 takeover of Tottenham Hotspur.

The SFO was quoted as saying: "The DTI has referred

its papers to the SFO in connection with Edenote and the matter is being considered."

The possible fraud inquiry will be a further blow to Venables who has been dogged by allegations about his business dealings since an extensive investigation by Panorama last year.

Colleagues said Friday that Venables was refusing to discuss the possible SFO inquiry.

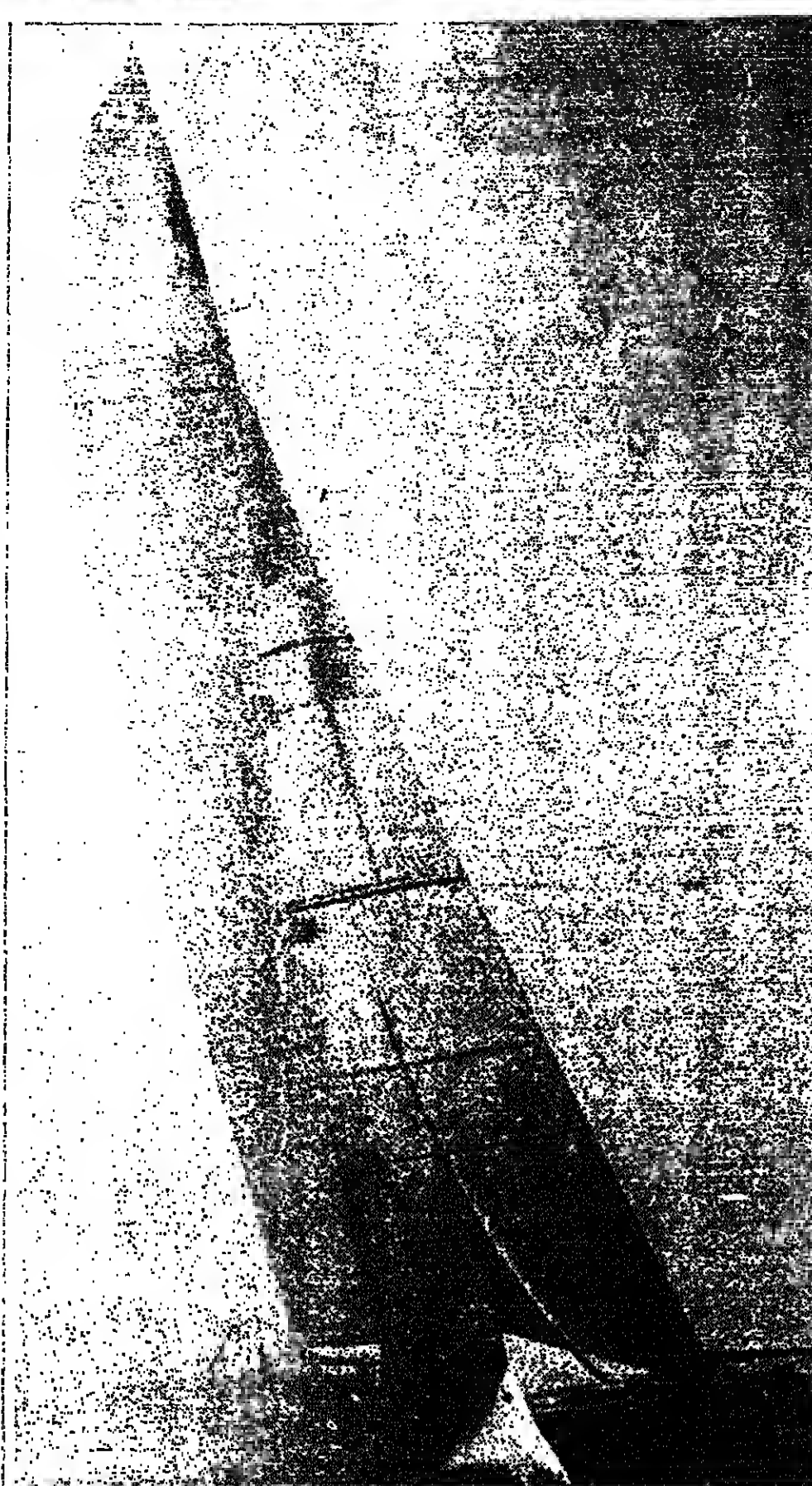
However, in a statement about the Panorama programme, he said: "I find it astounding that a second programme has been authorised when the first one was so partisan and inaccurate. Venables has always denied the claims made against him, and last year he offered to give £250,000 (\$375,000) to charity if anyone could prove them."

Venables was appointed England manager in January after assuring the Football Association all his business dealings were above board.

Lawyers for Venables issued a libel writ against the BBC in October last year, but that was allowed to lapse during the fraud inquiry.

A fresh writ was issued Thursday, said the Independent.

Late Friday, the BBC declined to comment.



The Australian entry into the International America's Cup Class (IACC) World Championships, OneAustralia, rounds a marker buoy Friday during the first race of the IACC, taking place off the coast of San Diego, CA.

OneAustralia won the regatta event, ahead of America Cubed, the all-woman entry and Dennis Conner's Stars and Stripes (AFP photo)

Australia wins opening sailing race at IACC championships

SAN DIEGO (AP) — John Bertrand turned back an early challenge by America's historic women's team and sailed OneAustralia to a runaway victory in the opening race of the second International America's Cup Class World Championships.

Bertrand and Kevin Mahoney aboard Pact 95's Spirit of Unum were the only slippers in the six-yacht fleet who did not cross the starting line early Friday.

America's and Age of Russia turned back for the mandatory restart, but Dennis Conner's Stars and Stripes and Nippon 92 were disqualified.

America's, sailing its namesake yacht that defended the America's Cup in 1992 with a male crew, overcame its poor start and crossed in front of OneAustralia halfway up the first windward leg, but OneAustralia, showing its superior boat speed, overtook America's and led by 1 minute 13 seconds at the first turning mark.

OneAustralia and America's remained 1-2 the remainder of the six-leg, 18.55-mile (29.88-km) race. The Aussies' biggest lead was 4:27 at the fifth mark, and the final margin was 3:20.

"It's great for OneAustralia to come halfway around the world and win this first race," Bertrand said. "We

learned a lot. We're delighted with today's results."

Said America's navigator Courtenay Becker-Dey: "We made the mistake of letting OneAustralia get to the left of us but we didn't know it was a mistake at the time."

OneAustralia's elapsed time over the windward-leeward course was 2 hours, 53 minutes, 41 seconds.

Stars and Stripes crossed the line third, Nippon was fourth and Spirit of Unum fifth, but disqualifications moved Spirit of Unum up to third, 15:20 behind OneAustralia. Age of Russia failed to finish within the allotted 30 minutes of OneAustralia.

The west-southwesterly wind ranged from 5 to 8 knots.

The five-race world championship is a prelude to the 1995 America's Cup, which begins in January. Russia is ineligible to sail in the America's Cup.

Leslie Egnot, an American citizen who lives in Auckland, New Zealand, was at the helm in the competitive debut of America's, the first all-women crew in America's Cup history.

Asked if America's felt it proved a point, Egnot said: "I don't feel we have to prove anything."

After a period of silence, Bertrand jumped in and said: "There's no question the women will come on strong

and be formidable."

Bertrand is the only man to take the cup from American shores. He beat Conner off Newport, R. I., in 1983 to snap the New York yacht club's 132-year winning streak. Conner won back the cup in Australia in 1987.

OneAustralia, launched in April, was the only new-generation yacht sailing Friday. Nippon 94 was entered, but dismantled during training Tuesday and wasn't repaired in time for Friday's race. It was expected back by Saturday or Tuesday.

Bertrand dodged questions about the fact his boat is so much newer than the rest. "We're very encouraged," he said.

All of these 75-foot (25-metre) yachts will be replaced by new ones for next year's America's Cup, although there's a chance Bertrand will be forced to use his current yacht.

The San Diego Yacht Club has alleged that OneAustralia and Australian Challenge are actually a single super-syndicate that has built three boats in violation of a rule limiting syndicates to just two each.

The matter could end up before an international jury. And if it rules against the Australians, the OneAustralia syndicate won't be able to use a yacht that's under construction.

Borussia stay clear of rivals

BONN (AFP) — Borussia Dortmund kept ahead of their German league rival here Saturday as they took the points at Dynamo Dresden.

Andreas Moeller's 34th minute goal was enough for the two points — and enough to keep Borussia in the clear as chasing Werder Bremen, Borussia Moenchengladbach and Freiburg all won at home.

Bremen, second in the Bundesliga, were not too hard pushed by Eintracht

Frankfurt, their 2-0 win courtesy of a double from Russian Vladimir Bestsehnich. That gave them 17 points, one behind the leaders.

Borussia Moenchengladbach, on 14, made more of a meal of lowly Munich 1860, but Swede Martin Dahlin finally broke through after 66 minutes and midfielder Thomas Kastenmaier made sure with just six to go the final whistle.

Freiburg beat Cologne 4-2. Reigning champions Bayern Munich ended the

day with mixed feelings.

Still without the injured French international Jean-Pierre Papin, they found themselves 2-0 down early in the second half at home to Stuttgart.

Alexander Zickler (64th) and German skipper Lothar Matthaus with a header (82nd) earned them an eventual draw — their fourth in a row at home — but that still left them in seventh, a position hardly likely to satisfy club supremo Franz Beckenbauer.



Andreas Moeller

Ethiopia disbands national team

ADDIS ABABA (R) — Ethiopia said Friday it had disbanded its national soccer team because their long run of poor performances were a disgrace and they lacked sportsmanship. The Ethiopian Football Federation said in a statement it was organising a new national team, which would be picked by a technical committee instead of the chief coach. The federation said Ethiopia were not withdrawing from the Africa Cup of nations tournament.

Jockey Tse in tears after narrow defeat

MELBOURNE, Australia (AFP) — Hong Kong jockey Jackie Tse broke down in tears and was comforted by former Australian Prime Minister Bob Hawke after his mount Danewin was narrowly beaten in the VRC Derby here Saturday.

Tse, tears streaming down his face, was consoled by Danewin's owner Sunny Yam and Hawke after weighing in after the 2,500m event at Flemington racetrack.

Tse rode the 6-4 favourite hands and heels inside the final 200 metres after gaining the lead, not opting to use the whip.

Robert Sanester-owned

Blevic, starting at 5-2, got the better of Danewin in the final 50 metres, edging away to score impressively by a half length with Stony Bay (6-1) a length back third.

Hawke, waiting on the weighing room steps, hugged Tse when the jockey returned to the mounting yard.

And he kept him there, patting him on the head and whispering in his ear while press photographers captured the touching scene.

Hawke is the Australian representative of Danewin's Hong Kong-based owner Sunny Yam.

"Good run, very unlucky," said Tse of Danewin.

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Cuba overcome Germany to reach semis of World Volleyball Championship

SAO PAULO (R) — Favourites Cuba dispatched Germany 3-0 with little difficulty to win through to the semifinals of the women's world volleyball championship Friday.

In a competition which has already seen a large number of one-sided contests, the Cubans won 15-9, 15-5, 15-5, maintaining their record of not dropping a set in the tournament.

Germany defended tenaciously and even managed to fight back from 4-0 to 4-3 down in the third set but it was to no avail as Cuba swept them aside.

Brazil, who copied their country's World Cup soccer players by holding hands as they entered the court, also won in straight sets against Japan to the accompaniment of hysterical screams from the home crowd.

Brazil took the first set 15-10 but Japan improved in the second to be at set point at 15-14 but wasted the chance, allowing Brazil to take the set 17-15.

With the Japanese demoralised, Brazil encountered little resistance as they wrapped up the third set 15-7.

Brazil coach Bernardinho was still not entirely happy. "We made a lot of fundamental mistakes," he said.

But Brazil's win was a big relief to the organisers as public interest in the tournament has centred almost entirely around the host nation.

While the 26,000 crowd for Tuesday's Brazil-China game was a record for women's volleyball, games not involving Brazil have been played in almost deserted arenas.

U.S. baseball strike has impact on publications and TV

NEW YORK (AP) — The offseason starts in about 10 days for Baseball Weekly, which kept its regular publishing schedule even after U.S. Major League baseball abandoned its season.

The player's strike that began Aug. 12 cost the tabloid about a third of its regular 300,000-plus circulation. The 30 per cent advertising gains enjoyed before the strike evaporated. Without Major League box scores and statistics, the paper shrank to two-thirds of its usual size.

But it published every week for the full season which was to have ended with the World Series, scheduled to have starting Saturday.

Baseball weekly offers a striking example of how the strike affected U.S. media companies ranging from television networks to cable systems and newspapers.

The strike also affected ABC and NBC — two of the three largest U.S. television networks — which were in the first year of a six-year partnership with Major League baseball.

They were splitting the rights to broadcast postseason games, with ABC getting the "World Series." They filed in with movies and their regular schedule of programs. But demand for network advertising time has been strong, and that was expected to soften the financial blow of losing playoff broadcasts.

The cable television system operator, Time Warner Cable of New York City, is giving subscribers credit for missed baseball games. System president Richard Aurelio said the credits could range to as much as \$16 for a subscriber who got both channels that carried hits and Yankees games.

Some major metropolitan newspapers said the strike hurt newsstand sales, especially if local teams had a chance to be in the playoffs.

At the Los Angeles Times, spokeswoman Laura Morgan said the strike cost the paper about 10,000 in daily circulation in the regular season and possibly another 10,000 in the postseason, had the Dodgers made it that far.

The paper's average weekday circulation is about 1.1 million.

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution cited a similar 10,000 copy decline in daily circulation and expects a \$300,000 ad revenue loss due to the strike. The Atlanta Braves were in the playoffs each of the last three seasons.

Agassi loses to Ivanisevic in Stockholm

STOCKHOLM (AP) — Goran Ivanisevic edged U.S. Open champion Andre Agassi 10-8 in a see-saw tiebreak Friday night to gain the semifinals of the Stockholm Open.

Each player blew a match point in the tiebreak before the world's second ranked player connected with a cross-court forehand to win the quarterfinal 6-1, 3-6, 7-6 (10-8).

"It was very close, obviously it could have gone either way," Agassi said. "It went his way and there's not much you can do about it."

Agassi, who rallied from a set down to win his first two matches here in three sets, came close again.

He had a match point leading 6-7 in the tiebreaker. But Ivanisevic, one of the biggest servers in the game, tied it 8-8 with an ace. Another ace by the tall Croatian gave him an 9-8 edge.

"Those aces gave me more confidence," Ivanisevic said. "It meant a lot."

Ivanisevic, the 1992 Stockholm Open champion, had a match point at 7-6 in the tiebreak, but his forehand sailed long.

Ivanisevic's victory snapped Agassi's 14-match winning streak that started in the U.S. Open, where the American became the first unseeded player to win the men's singles in the open era.

"I don't want to complain but it was unbelievable that they changed the court in the middle of the tournament," Ivanisevic said.

One green set trophy court was installed overnight, replacing the two parallel courts used earlier in the tournament. Although the surface was the same, several players complained it was faster in the opening round.

Agassi, seeded No. 9, in his last two matches against Ivanisevic, in the 1992 Wimbledon final and the semi in Vienna, Austria, last



Goran Ivanisevic

weekend.

"It was nice to cut him when he was on a roll," Ivanisevic said. "Last week I had no chance."

Ivanisevic was due to play Russia's rising star Evgeny Kafelnikov in the semifinals. They're 1-1 lifetime.

Kafelnikov, seeded no. 11, rallied from a set down to defeat No. 4 Sergi Bruguera 6-7 (4-7), 6-4, 6-2.

Top-seed Pete Sampras rode his big serve to an easy victory over Magnus Larsson Friday and a berth against world No. 1 Andre Agassi in the semifinals of the \$1.72 million tournament.

The world's top-ranked player won 6-1, 6-4 on the

Globe Arena's fast carpet, dropping only five points in his own service games. Two of them were double-faults.

"I think I really played well today against a very tough opponent who's been playing well this week, beating (Michael) Chang," Sampras said.

The American needed four sets in the opening singles against Larsson in the Sweden-United States Davis Cup semifinals at Goteborg last month. But he was never challenged by the lanky Swede this time.

"I knew it would be a tough match and I kind of surprised myself a little bit as far as how well I played

today," Sampras said.

Larsson, who clinched Sweden's 3-2 Davis Cup victory over the United States by defeating Todd Martin in the fifth and decisive match, knocked off Chang in the second round. The unseeded Swede is ranked 28th in the world.

Becker, a three-time Stockholm Open champion in 1988, 1990 and 1991, also won his quarterfinal in straight sets, 7-6 (7-3), 6-5 over defending champion and fellow German Michael Stich.

Sampras has yet to lose a set in the tournament, but has only played two matches. He received a first-round bye

as all other 15 seeds and the Marc Rosset withdrew because of the flu, giving the American an extra day of rest Thursday.

That's the least Sampras wants. He was sidelined 45 days in the summer because of tendinitis in his left ankle. Then came back for the U.S. Open and was upset by Jimmy Zang in the round of 16.

Then, playing the next two last singles in the Davis Cup semifinals five weeks ago, Sampras pulled a hamstring against Stefan Edberg as Sweden won the match 3-2.

Sampras didn't return to competitive tennis until last week, when he reached the semifinals in an exhibition in Hong Kong.

Becker is likely to be Sampras' toughest opponent in the tournament. The sixth seeded German always plays well on carpet and has the highest won-lost ratio in Stockholm (20-3).

Becker, who has won three ATP singles titles this year, is one of 12 players looking for one of the remaining four spots in the ATP Tour World Championship in Frankfurt next month.

"I've played Boris a number of times and I feel good about my chances," said Sampras, who has won a total leading eight events this year. "The court plays a little different now. It's slower, but good for the fans."

Habsudova beats Hingis

In Essen, Germany, Martina Hingis bid to reach the first semifinal of her year-end professional tennis career, but lost Friday in a three-set tie to Karina Habsudova, 6-3, 6-4, 6-2.

Habsudova, a Slovak, won the 14-year-old Swiss prize, 6-3, 2-6, 6-2 to advance to the semifinal clash against Novotna of the Czech Republic.

NHL negotiations to resume after union rejects offer

NEW YORK (R) — National Hockey League (NHL) officials said Friday that talks will take place next week at an undisclosed time and place in an effort to settle the labour impasse that has kept the 1994-95 season on hold.

NHL director of operations Brian Burke said the site, date and time of the talks might not be disclosed until after they were held.

Also Friday, the National Hockey League Players' Association (NHLPA) rejected a proposal by owners to end their lockout.

Two days earlier, Jeffrey Pash, the league's general counsel, sent a letter to union chief Bob Goodenow saying that the NHL would provide complete financial information he requested if the players returned to work under modified terms of the league's Oct. 10 contract proposal.

If an independent audit concluded that the league was healthier than owners have disclosed, the terms would be off, under the rejected proposal.

"Obviously and without any doubt we have no interest in their proposal," Goodenow said Friday.

Goodenow said the union was still awaiting a reply to its request to NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman for complete financial data.

The league contends that it lost \$32 million in 1992-93 and that half of its 26 teams were losing money. The players' association disputes those numbers.

The NHL went to great pains to point out the differences between itself and the extremely profitable National Basketball Association (NBA) in light of Thursday's no-lockout, no-strike announcement by the NBA and its players' union.

"The NBA arrangement preserves a status quo for that league that is competitively and economically sound," an NHL statement said.

"The National Hockey League has gone from a profitable league to one with losses approaching \$70 million over the last two seasons. To accept a status quo of

salary increases outpacing revenue growth would guarantee severe losses and place several teams in jeopardy."

The NHL has already cancelled four games for each team from its 84-game regular season schedule and further cancellations are likely with the work stoppage in its 28th day and no end in sight.

After the league rejected the union's last counterproposal earlier this month, Bettman said the season would not begin without a collective bargaining agreement in place.

Goodenow met with Bettman Monday in Chicago but no progress was reported. The union was planning informational meetings with players in Toronto next Wednesday.

Since the NHL's originally scheduled Oct. 1 start date, 154 games had been missed through Friday night.

Meanwhile, several European NHL players have already returned home to play for teams in Finland, the Czech Republic, Russia, Germany and Sweden.

And with other players itching to get back on the ice, a number of charity games and tours are taking shape.

The players' association is

Russia pardons players who defected to U.S.

MOSCOW (AP) — Russia's foreign ministry ordered new passports issued to two ice hockey stars who left the Soviet Union illegally to play in America.

The move effectively pardons Alexander Mogilyov and Sergei Fyodorov, and clears the way for them to take part in a charity tournament in Russia next month with other Russians playing for American teams.

Authorities also said they had dropped criminal charges filed against Mogilyov when he left the Soviet Union in 1990 while serving in the army and playing on an army team.

Mogilyov emigrated to the United States to join the Buffalo Sabres, and Fyodorov left in 1990 to join the Detroit Red Wings. Both are now among the highest-paid players in the National Hockey League.

Vladimir Vinogradov, head of the foreign ministry's consular service, ordered the Russian passports to be issued to the two players.

sponsoring a three-day tournament for charity next month in Hamilton, Ontario, in which some 50 NHL players are expected to take part.

Los Angeles Kings superstar Wayne Gretzky said Thursday he was planning to lead an all-star goodwill tour of Europe in December if

players are still idled by the lockout.

"I have been playing hockey for 30 years and now I am not playing and I am frustrated. I literally hate it," Gretzky said.

A tour of Russia by the NHL's Russian-born stars is also in the works.

Amman Little League

Following are results of games played on Friday Oct. 28, 1994 and the standing up to Oct. 28, 1994.

Sunquick	Vs Arab Medical Containers	00	Tied
Koch	Vs Aramex	20	
Adritec	Vs Jamco	10	
Paintex	Vs Forum Furniture	00	Tied
Ghattas	Vs Al-Hikma	10	
Sipes	Vs Ahlia-Abella	10	
Gulf Agency Co.	Vs G.E.M.T.	42	
Ayoubi Steel Factory	Vs UPS	63	
British Airways	Vs C.C.C.	82	

Final standings up to 28/10/94

Seniors

1	American Kitchen	9
2	British Airways	5
3	C.C.C.	2

Mids

1	Steel Factory	10
2	G.E.M.T.	8
3	Gulf Agency Co.	8
4	U.P.S.	6

Juniors II

1	Ghattas Blinds	12
2	Al-Hikma	11
3	Ahli-Abella	4
4	Sipes	4

Juniors I

1	Adritec	12
2	Jamco	7
3	JWM	6
4	Forum Furniture	6
5	Paintex	3

Tots

1	Koch	15
2	Aramex	7
3	Sunquick	5
4	Arab Med. Cont.	4

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NORTH

♠ A 10 4 2

♥ Q 6 3

♦ K J 5

♣ A J 7

WEST

♠ 2 3

♥ A K 8 5

♦ A 10 8

♣ 6 5 4

EAST

♠ J 10 9 4

♥ 8 7 4 2

♦ 10 9 8

SOUTH

♠ Q J 9 6 5

♥ 7 2

♦ Q 6

♣ K Q 3 2

The bidding:

West North East South

Pass 1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠

Pass 2 ♠ Pass 4 ♠

Pass Pass

Opening lead: King of ♠

Perhaps the most famous kibitzer in the annals of New York bridge was known as The Rabbi. Not because of any deep religious conviction, but because with the advantage of hindsight, he would always pontificate on how the hand should have been played or defended. One of his more famous aphorisms has become known in bridge lore as "The Rabbi's Rule: "When the king is singleton, play the ace." At the table on one has the vision to know that the monarch can be guillotined, but sometimes it is obvious that the

Declarer continued with a diamond and West performed had to take both red aces or risk losing one of the red-suit tricks to which East-West were entitled. But now the hand was an open book. West, a passed hand, had already shown up with the ace-king of hearts and ace of diamonds and, therefore, could not possibly have the king of spades as well.

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	Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30		Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 5:00, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30		Shows: 3:15, 5:00		at 10 a.m. For reservation call tel: 618274-618275		Theater close Sunday and Monday		Daily at 8:30 p.m. Saturday & Sunday is the theatre's holiday.	

مركزنا للأنجل

Christopher stocks up after Mideast trek

WASHINGTON (R) — U.S. President Bill Clinton returned on Saturday from a marathon Middle East tour convinced he had advanced the peace dialogue and appreciating the trust leaders in the region have in Secretary of State Warren Christopher.

From Mr. Clinton's praise of Mr. Christopher for his work and from the comments of other advisers, it seemed clear that the president was looking at his oft-criticized secretary of state in a new light — highly regarded in the Middle East and perhaps indispensable.

Mr. Clinton led a 69th birthday party for Mr. Christopher aboard the Air Force One president jet on Thursday and spoke admiringly of the man he calls "Chris" — who just months ago was in trouble and seemed on his way out of office because of foreign policy mishaps.

The celebration was on the flight to Israel from Syria after Mr. Clinton held talks in Damascus with Syrian President Hafez Al Assad.

"It's obvious to me going to these meetings with all these leaders, including Assad, that they trust the United States, they trust Chris, and they trust what we say, and I think that's an important thing and enables us to keep going forward," he said.

Mr. Christopher bore much of the blame for foreign policy fumbles, such as over Bosnia, that damaged U.S. credibility abroad.

But a successful U.S. military mission to Haiti, Mr. Clinton's stunning down of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, a nuclear agreement with North Korea and Middle East progress have added gloss to the entire Clinton foreign policy team, including Mr. Christopher.

Mr. Clinton since the summer has been known to have been in a "wait-and-see" mode on whether to bring in a replacement for Mr. Christopher at the end of the year, the mid-point of his four-year term and traditional time for making cabinet changes.

But rising public approval of Mr. Clinton's foreign policy may have blunted the need to make a change.

Aides say Mr. Clinton's visit to the Middle East may have strengthened the chances the secretary should stay, particularly at this crucial juncture when a deal between Israel and Syria could be a matter of months away.

It was not lost on the Clinton team that Mr. Christopher's diplomatic skills were praised by Israeli and Arab leaders alike whom the president visited on a four-day, six-country swing through Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Israel, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

"He's been very, very involved and will continue to be very, very involved. When he was given a medal by the

emir of Kuwait, I was very struck by the look of affection on the emir's face. He's going to keep doing what he's doing — a very, very good job," said one top official.

Mr. Christopher himself was absolutely beaming about Middle East prospects as he parted from Mr. Clinton's entourage late on Friday at the airport at Haifa, Al Badin, Saudi Arabia, and left for an economic conference in Casablanca.

"I'm very encouraged," he said. "There is momentum." Mr. Clinton and his top aides saw several advances in the process despite some publicly expressed doubts in Israel about U.S. claims that the Clinton talks with Mr. Assad produced "substantive progress" on the issues dividing Syria and Israel.

Senior officials said Mr. Assad made concessionary noises that they will not discuss in their role as mediator. They insisted Mr. Assad had intended to condemn the killing of innocents by Islamic militants at his news conference with Mr. Clinton.

But they maintained he was too unsettled by the aggressive question that led to his response to express this.

They said their argument was backed up by the fact that Syrian television broadcast Mr. Clinton's reference to Mr. Assad's private condemnation of innocent deaths in their talks.

A senior White House official said Israeli doubts reported in Israeli newspapers were not surprising "because any good bargainer is not going to look too pleased at the concessions the other side might make, because that's simply not the way our bargain."

U.S. officials credit Mr. Clinton's ability to develop trusting personal relationships with these leaders as one reason why progress can be made. As an example of this even-handed approach, they cite his speech to Jordan's Parliament Wednesday night when he condemned Islamic extremism but said America respects the religion of Islam.

"The fact is that especially in the Middle East, personal relationships among the leaders matter hugely more than any other region," one senior official said.

Does this mean Mr. Clinton will become his own shuttle diplomat?

"I would be very, very surprised if he ever did do shuttle diplomacy because that's not what presidents do," said one top aide.

"But what is clear is that at crucial moments, especially in this region, presidential involvement is very, very important, and I would expect to see him at critical moments — I don't know how yet — intervening, using these personal relationships, trying to cut deals," he said.



PRO-PEACE RALLY: Students of the University of Jordan Saturday demonstrate in support of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty signed on Wednesday. (Photo by Yousef Allan)

Israeli soldier killed, 15 injured in Lebanon

MARJAYOUN, Lebanon (Agencies) — An Israeli soldier was killed and six more wounded in a bomb attack by Hizbollah fighters in South Lebanon on Saturday, security sources said.

Eight civilians and a guerrilla were also wounded in the fighting, which erupted as Hizbollah launched a wide-ranging attack on Israeli troops and their proxy South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia in the "security zone" along the border.

The bomb was set off as an eight-man army unit arrived to recover a position which had been captured and then abandoned by the guerrillas.

The group said it had attacked five positions held by the "Israeli enemy and its agents" in a flare-up a day after U.S. President Bill Clinton ended a Middle East tour aimed at pushing forward the peace process.

"Our fighters stormed their position at Dabsh, on the edge of the 'security zone', killed and wounded 'those who were inside, and raised Hizbollah flags,' a Hizbollah spokesman said in Beirut.

He added that a bomb attack on reinforcements sent to recapture the position had left eight Israeli casualties. Israel denied that the post had been captured.

The security sources said Hizbollah had planted the bomb and then waited for the Israelis to arrive before setting it off.

Hizbollah, which is supported by Syria and fiercely opposes the peace process, said it had launched the operation in protest at Arab "capitulation" and in revenge for Israeli shelling which killed six civilians last week.

SLA sources said five Israeli soldiers were wounded when their hilltop post at Al Taher on the edge of the Israel-held zone in South Lebanon came under machinegun and anti-tank rocket fire from guerrillas.

One of the wounded Israelis died later, they added. He was the first Israeli death since Aug. 29 when a soldier was killed by guerrillas.

The sources said a Lebanese villager died of severe wounds inflicted by Israeli shelling. An Israeli-allied militiaman, a guerrilla and six civilians were wounded.

The eruption of fighting followed a lull during Mr. Clinton's visit to Syria on Thursday.

"The resistance has been a very low-key mode since the beginning of September with attacks only against the SLA. Today's exchanges were fierce and covered a wide area," an independent security source in South Lebanon told Reuters.

"The restraint, either self-imposed or suggested or a combination of both, was so that the Clinton visit would not deviate from its main course."

Zeroual pursues political track; army vows to destroy militants

ALGIERS (AFP) — Algerian President Liamine Zeroual pursued talks Saturday to end the Islamic extremist guerrillas war as the army chief vowed to crack down on armed gangs fighting the regime.

Officials said Mr. Zeroual held talks with representatives of six political parties, including the Socialist Forces Front (FFS) and the Rally for Culture and Democracy (RCD), which have been boycotting talks with the government.

The aim was to assess progress in finding a political solution to the conflict, which began after the January 1992 cancellation of a general election the now outlawed Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) was poised to win, but officials gave no further details.

No member of the former sole ruling National Liberation Front (FLN), which began its war of independence from France 40 years ago next Tuesday, attended the talks on Saturday, officials said.

The FLN instead issued a statement calling on the government to renounce its "policy of confrontation and eradication" against the Islamists and to annul all emergency legislation.

It demanded "the total implementation of the constitution in regard to the exercise of power and respect for individual and collective human rights."

The army chief of staff,

General Mohammad Lamari, however, cited "respect for the constitution" as a basis for the battle against "backward and obscurantist forces, traitors to the nation and to Islam."

In a message to the armed forces published in the military review El Djeich, Gen. Lamari said that he was convinced that the army "will find all the necessary energy to persevere in its action against the criminals and lawless, faithless adventurers."

He stressed that the military, which has been the backbone of Algerian regimes since independence in 1962, was "profoundly republican" and believed in "strong and democratic institutions" and duly elected government.

The army of about 140,000 men is in the front line of the war against the Islamic groups, which has claimed 10,000 lives between February 1992 and December 1993, according to an official toll.

Clashes and the murder of many scores of civilians, particularly journalists, doctors, teachers and other intellectuals, have continued unabated this year. More than 60 foreigners accused by extremists of cooperating with the government have been killed.

A former imam and member of the ruling council of the FIS, Sheikh Ali Ayia, appeared at length on Algerian television on Friday and denounced the methods of the armed gangs, whom he

described as "thieves, criminals and traitors."

The former prayer leader of the mosque in an eastern Algiers suburban area, Les Dunes, said he had been kidnapped by an armed gang almost two months ago and escaped two weeks ago.

Sheikh Ayia said he had been forced to sign a "warning to journalists" which was given in August to the director of the magazine Horoscope, Brahim Tachouiche, who was briefly abducted and then freed by the Islamic Salvation Army, armed wing of the FIS.

"I had a sawn-off shotgun against my temple and a knife at throat," the imam said. "I swear by God that these people know nothing of Islam nor even how to say their prayers properly."

"All they know of the Sharia is throat-cutting," he added.

Earlier Friday, the two leaders of the FIS, Abassi Madani and Ali Belhadj, called for an end to house arrest and "total freedom" in order to help end the violence.

In their first public statement since the military-backed government freed them from jail on Sept. 13, they called for total freedom to find "a legal and just solution to bring the country out of crisis."

They were convicted of state security offences in June 1992 and sentenced to 12 years in prison.

Papers feud over Mahfouz novel

CAIRO (R) — A battle has broken out among Egyptian newspapers for the right to serialise a controversial novel by Nobel Laureate Naguib Mahfouz which was banned for 35 years because of charges by religious leaders it insults Islam.

Mr. Mahfouz, the only Arab to win the Nobel Prize for literature, was stabbed and seriously wounded two weeks ago by suspected Muslim militants.

To celebrate his recovery, Al Ahran, newspaper, claiming exclusive rights to the novel, said in a front page article on Saturday it would serialise "Children of Ghabalawi," despite a religious ban which has yet to be lifted.

But it said it may wait until "a suitable time for objective and deliberate reading of this symbolic work," suggesting clashes between the government and Islamists were not the right background against which to air the book's religious themes.

Other papers have jumped straight in. Al Ahali newspaper stole a lead on Wednesday by publishing a first instalment, and the evening newspaper Misa has placed advertisements saying it too will start publication of the book on Saturday.

Al Ahran printed what it said was a handwritten agreement by the author in hospital a week ago, giving the paper exclusive rights. It said it would take legal action against any other attempts to publish without Mr. Mahfouz's permission.

Egyptian writers, while welcoming the scramble to publish a book they say should never have been banned, say they feared the row was turning Mr. Mahfouz into a government puppet in its campaign against fundamentalist Muslim militants.

"The accident Mahfouz has been through has been turned into propaganda for the government," said novelist Radwa Ashour.

"All the officials went to visit him to show they are for culture and for literature. Now government newspapers are trying the same thing," she said.

Al Azhar, the highest Islamic authority in Egypt, has banned "Children of Ghabalawi" on grounds that it offends Islam by including characters clearly representing God and the prophets.

"The ban still stands, nothing has changed," an Azhar official who declined to be named told Reuters.

The book, written in 1959, is an allegorical description of life in a poor quarter of Cairo, drawing strongly from Biblical and Koranic figures.

Kuwaitis move faster than Saudis on ties with Israel

DUBAI (AFP) — President Bill Clinton's Gulf visit produced a Kuwaiti commitment to have relations with Israel once Middle East peace is achieved, but Saudi Arabia remained vague on the issue.

Mr. Clinton's swing through the Gulf at the end of the Middle East tour was partly aimed at encouraging the two states to join the peace wagon.

His talks Friday with Kuwait's emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, and later with Saudi King Fahd covered the prospects of opening ties with Israel, a diplomatic source in the region said.

Sheikh Jaber, in the clearest such statement from a Gulf Arab state, said he would work toward having diplomatic ties with Israel "as soon as the peace process is finished successfully."

The Saudi leadership renewed its support for the peace process — but made no commitment on normal relations with Israel.

An American diplomat said that Kuwait, heavily dependent for protection from the United States because of the Iraqi threat, would be more ready to opening ties with U.S.-ally Israel.

A senior Kuwaiti official

who requested anonymity told AFP Friday that "Kuwait is ready to have diplomatic relations with Israel. But we're waiting for Syria."

Talks between Syria and Israel have stalled over the extent and conditions of an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights it captured in 1967.

"The peace process looks like a train, our carriage cannot overtake the others, but we will all end up in Tel Aviv," the official added.

Mr. Clinton, in the joint press conference with the emir, thanked Kuwait for helping in getting its Gulf Cooperation Council partners — Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman and the United Arab Emirates — to lift the boycott of companies dealing with Israel on Sept. 30.

By helping lead the way to end the boycott of Israel, Kuwait is saying let us close the door on the past," the U.S. president said.

By contrast, King Fahd only agreed to pledge that he will continue to help efforts to bring about a peace treaty between Israel and the two holdouts in the Middle East.

(Continued on page 7)

Hassan II urges French tolerance of headscarves

PARIS (R) — King Hassan of Morocco pleaded on Saturday for French tolerance as the Paris government pledged to enforce a ban on girls wearing Islamic headscarves in state schools.

The monarch, a leading voice in the Muslim community, urged France not to brand pupils wearing headscarves as fundamentalists "with knives between their teeth."

The king, entering a row on such headgear in two interviews published on Saturday, accused France of being the European country least open to other cultures and languages.

France pledged on Friday to enforce a ban on Islamic headscarves in secular state schools which it sees as a sign of repression of women and of dangerous Muslim fundamentalism. The girls say they are part of traditional dress.

"Why make out (the headscarves affair) to be something diabolical? Because some people wanted to see it as a symbol of fundamentalism," the monarch told the daily Liberation.

"But some of these (youngsters) only want to stand out, like skinheads, some others are obeying ignorant parents who listen to an imam preaching nonsense who knows nothing of the real teachings of Islam," he said.

As little as 15 years ago, he said, it was inconceivable in France for a woman to enter a church without covering her head and wearing a decent skirt.

Twenty-five students have been expelled from France's state schools, including 17 from a high school in Lille in northern France this week, since the government cracked down on religious fundamentalism in schools last month.

In a separate interview with the weekly Le Point, King Hassan said that everything depended on the state of mind of the young woman who wore the headscarf.

If it was the French State, I would be justified in being on my guard if wearing them became almost a general rule and no longer a personal or isolated act by 10 or 15 young girls.

"But to think that those who wear a scarf can the next day have a knife between their teeth is going too far," he said.

According to the French education ministry, 860 young women wear Islamic headscarves, out of some 150,000 to 200,000 Muslim schoolgirls in the country.

Orders to state schools from conservative Education Minister Francois Bayrou are to bar "ostentatious religious symbols" from classrooms. Most French liberals back the ban.

COLUMN

Ex-navy pilot awarded \$1.65m in sex case

LAS VEGAS (R) — Former U.S. Navy Lieutenant Paula Coughlin, the first woman to complain she was sexually harassed at a 1991 pilot's convention, was awarded \$1.65 million in compensatory damages Friday against the hotel where the event was held and its parent company. That sum could be tripled when the jury in the case which rocked navy considers punitive damages, starting Monday. More than 80 women, including Lt. Coughlin, were alleged to have been groped and sexually molested as they ran a gamut of drunken male pilots in a third floor hallway of the Las Vegas Hilton during the annual meeting of the Tailhook Association of Navy and Marine Aviators on Sept. 7, 1991. The association's name stems from the device used to snag planes landing on aircraft carriers. A federal jury in Las Vegas Friday found that the Las Vegas Hilton was negligent in its security arrangements. Lt. Coughlin declined to comment to reporters but her lawyer, Dennis Schoville, said: "I'm very gratified that the jury has vindicated Paula Coughlin and justice has been served. I look forward to presenting the punitive phase to the jury Monday."

Coins in Trevi Fountain are up for grabs

ROME (AP) — The coins in the Trevi Fountain, tossed by tourists wishing to return to the eternal city, may be up for grabs. A Rome court has acquitted a man charged with stealing 170 coins from the fountain, ruling that the city government has no ownership rights, news reports said Friday. The coins have been collected on an irregular basis by the city and turned over as charity to the Red Cross. The court, in its decision, said the coins can be picked up by anyone — city authorities or private citizens. La Repubblica newspaper said. Many tourists take part in the tradition of tossing a coin over their shoulders into the 18th-century fountain to assure their return to Rome.

Former Indian minister's daughter alleges torture over dowry

NEW DELHI (AFP) — The daughter of a former Indian minister and a relative of assassinated Premier Rajiv Gandhi has accused her husband, the scion of a shipping magnate, of torturing her for more dowry, newspapers said Saturday. Radhika Tikoo, daughter-in-law of London-based multimillionaire Ravi Tikoo, filed criminal charges against husband Vikram in a special police unit dealing with dowry-related crimes here Friday, they said. She alleged in a 16-page report filed with the Crimes Against Women Cell that her husband beat her, called her a "fat b...ch," broke her arm and took away the jewellery given by her parents. The alleged mental and physical torture was for more dowry, the Times of India quoted her as saying. She has also filed for divorce. The Tikoo, both in their thirties, were married in 1988 at a society wedding here attended by heavyweight politicians, industrialists, film stars and socialites. They lived in the United States but returned to India in 1992, setting up home in a plush country house outside Delhi, near a farm belonging to slain Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi — a cousin of Radhika's father Arun Nehru. Mr. Nehru, a former confidant of Mr. Gandhi and a minister in his cabinet, was tight-lipped about the affair. "Since the matter is sub-judice, I would not like to comment," he said. The Tikoo were unavailable for comment. Dowry-related torture and death are fairly common in India, with disputes arising over huge sums to be paid by a bride's parents when an arranged marriage is struck between two families. Social activists, women groups and reformers have attacked the antiquated practice, but it is still prevalent across the country.

NEWS IN BRIEF

ADC testifies to U.N. on anti-Arab racism

WASHINGTON (Special) — In an unprecedented move, the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) has presented testimony to the United Nations on Oct. 13 regarding anti-Arab racism in the United States. The report was submitted to the United Nations special rapporteur on racism by ADC President Candace Lightner. This is the first occasion that the United Nations has included input from Arab organisations in its research into racism. The ADC presented information on numerous types of anti-Arab discrimination including: Anti-Arab bias in education, including teachers perpetuating negative stereotypes and the institutional communication of racism via textbooks; anti-Arab racism in the media through consistent negative portrayals which have encouraged a climate of suspicion and distrust towards Arab-Americans; discrimination against Arabs in immigration matters, including the security screenings by international airlines which continue unchecked by the U.S. government; bias in the federal government itself, including discriminatory questioning by the FBI of Arab-Americans; ethnic and politically-motivated acts of discrimination and violence especially during times of political tension in the Middle East; crimes against Arab-American merchants and the lack of effort by law enforcement officials to protect merchants in the immigrant community. As a result of ADC's participation, the United Nations will now include Arab-Americans as a community targeted for racism.

Policeman shot dead in Egypt

CAIRO (AFP) — Suspected Muslim militants shot dead a policeman in the troubled Minya province of southern Egypt on Saturday, police said. Ahmad Ashur Sayed was killed on his way to work in Minya, 300 kilometres south of Cairo. The assailants fled. Minya province has become the main stronghold of the underground Al Gamaa Al Islamiyah since August, after a police crackdown in neighbouring Assiut. More than 475 people have been killed since Islamic militants declared war on the secular government of President Hosni Mubarak in March 1992.

Sarid to attend conference in Tunisia

TEL AVIV (R) — Environment Minister Yossi Sarid will become the first Israeli minister to pay an official visit to Tunisia when he leaves on Sunday to attend a conference there on the future of the Mediterranean, his spokesman said. "Sarid is the first Israeli minister to visit Tunisia by official invitation from his Tunisian counterpart, Mohammed Mehdi Milka," spokesman Moshe Horowitz said on

Saturday. Although Israel and Tunisia have no diplomatic ties, several Israeli ministers have visited the country since the Jewish state's peace deal last year with the Palestine Liberation Organisation, headquartered in Tunis. Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres flew to Morocco on Friday to preside over the opening of an Israeli liaison office in Rabat. Morocco is opening a similar office in Tel Aviv.

Yemen government spends winter in Aden

ADEN (R) — Yemen will shortly move government and law-making bodies from Sanaa to Aden, stronghold of separatists beaten in this year's civil war, after declaring the southern port the winter capital, officials said on Saturday. Making Aden the winter capital is seen by political sources as an attempt to rehabilitate the city, which bore the brunt of fighting in the two-month civil war that ended in July, and as a gesture of good will to southern Yemenis. Aden was the capital of South Yemen before it merged with the North in 1990. The union fell apart this year when southern secessionists led by former Vice-President Ali Salem Al Beidh rebelled. Forces loyal to President Ali Abdullah Saleh captured Aden on July 7, ending the war. It was not clear when the government would move back to Sanaa, in northern Yemen.

Sudanese held for trading in kidneys

CAIRO (R) — Egyptian police on Saturday arrested a Sudanese man for arranging sales of human kidneys from hard-up Sudanese men and women to wealthy Gulf Arabs, security sources said. They said 36-year-old Habib Gamaledin forged letters from the Egyptian doctors' syndicate authorising Cairo hospitals to remove kidneys from "volunteer" donors and give them to the ailing recipients. In one operation, Mr. Gamaledin was paid 10,000 Egyptian pounds (about \$3,000) by a Saudi Arabian woman. The Sudanese woman donor received just 2,000 pounds (about \$600) for her kidney, the sources said.

Bomber injured in attack on Istanbul mosque

ANKARA (AFP) — A man was injured when the bomb he was planning in the courtyard of Istanbul's historic Suleimanieh mosque blew up on Saturday, the Turkish Anatolia agency reported. The agency named the victim as Savas Cetin, 25, and said he was carrying the explosive device in a bag. Suffering a leg injury he was arrested in a nearby carpark while trying to escape, the agency said. The sixteenth century mosque, built for Suleiman the Magnificent, is one of Istanbul's most visited tourist sites. On Friday in the western Turkey town of Izmir one person was killed and 42 injured in a bomb attack.